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American Studies

with American Studies International

Summer Reading Issue

MAKE AMERICA READ AGAIN

2019 Volume 58, Number 2

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American Studies

with American Studies International

A quarterly interdisciplinary journal sponsored by the Mid-America American Studies Association, the University of Kansas College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Department of American Studies, and KU Libraries.

ISSN 0026-3079

On the cover: Editorial Board Member John Gennari (back) and fellow classmates in Western Civ 101. Photo credit: Hilary Neroni.

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2019 **Volume 58, Number 2**

Dear *AMSJ* Readers,

A million years ago, way back in November 2016, the *AMSJ* Editorial Board members sat around a conference table at the surreal ASA meeting in Denver, Colorado, immediately following the presidential election.

"Select a timely theme for the photo shoot of the Summer Reading Issue," said our Agenda, as it does every year. But what could that mean in November 2016?

It has been a tradition of the journal since 2014 to publish an issue solely devoted to review essays and book reviews designed for assisting our readers with selecting their summer reading and their fall courses. But the most popular feature of the Summer Reading issue is the photo shoot, in which our Editorial Board members submit photographs of themselves according to a theme chosen the previous November.

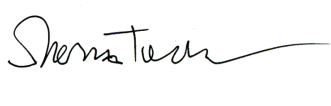
"Make America Read Again," said Editorial Board member Rebecca Hill. The acceptance of this theme was unanimous, spurring a stream of companion themes: "Make America Fact-Check Again" and "Make America Cite Sources Again." It was timely, true, and, at the time, very funny and very sad to those of us at the meeting.

By the time the issue was to go to press, however, the slogan had lost its capacity for levity. It was still timely, but too real. We couldn't get ourselves to do it.

We skipped the photo shoot in Summer 2017, and again in Summer 2018. We hoped that the theme would lose its relevance.

But here we are in Summer 2018 and the message still rings true, urgently so. As we journeyed through the "Let America Read the Muller Report" period into the era of "Make America Read the Muller Report," we gather our resolve and finally roll out our "Make American Read Again" photographs to accompany our annual Summer Reading Issue.

Let us continue to Read. Fact-Check. Cite.



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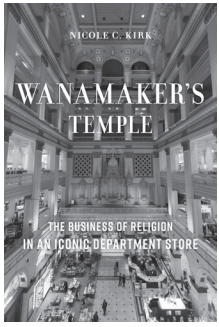
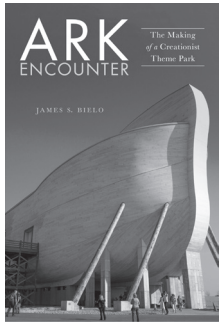
Review Essay

Playing with Noah in Wanamaker's Temple: (Re)Thinking U.S. Christianity in American Studies

Rachel Beckley





WANAMAKER'S TEMPLE: The Business of Religion in an Iconic Department Store. By Nicole C. Kirk. New York City: New York University Press. 2018.
ARK ENCOUNTER: The Making of a Creationist Theme Park. By James S. Bielo. New York City: New York University Press. 2018.

Religion has been, and remains, a driving force in American history. Yet, all too often scholars of American society and culture view religion and religiosity as secondary to prime movers like race, class, and gender. American Studies rarely engages with an in-depth analysis of religious practitioners or religious cultural creation, falling into the trap of relegating religious motivation to the realm of superstition. This is especially true in the current political moment where conservative Christian support of Republican politicians is seen as either the height of hypocrisy or a testament to political manipulation. Nevertheless, religious

0026-3079/2018/5802-007$2.50/0 American Studies, 58:2 (2019): 7–17

practitioners, far from opiate-takers with dulled senses, are active and creative in the public sector. With the recent scholarly work coming out of Anthropology, History, Religious Studies, and American Studies, however, religion is coming to the fore as a prime mover and motivator in American history.

Two such scholars, Nicole Kirk, an historian, and James Bielo, an ethnographer, have different methodologies, sources, time periods, and people, but both discuss how conservative Christians (variously defined) have influenced U.S. culture particularly in the business sector. Both at least tacitly understand their forms of conservative Christianity to be oppressive cultural creators, upholding gendered, classist, and racialized cultural norms. But, both scholars demonstrate how religious practitioners help(ed) to (re)create those cultural norms.

Fashioning Decorum with Wanamaker

In Nicole C. Kirk's first book *Wanamaker's Temple: The Business of Religion in an Iconic Department Store*, Kirk uncovers the life of John Wanamaker and the growth of his iconic department stores between 1880 and 1920. Wanamaker's example allows Kirk to interrogate the development of good taste, decorum, and respectability in U.S. culture by Protestant businessmen, a development that privileged white, middle-class values and norms.

Kirk represents the most recent scholar to take up the question of the role of religion, particularly Protestantism, and how it intersected with business interests and consumerism. Other scholars, including Kim Philips-Fein, Kevin Kruse, Darren Grem, Bethany Moreton, and Darren Dochuck (to name a few), have looked to the 1920s-1960s to set up the interwoven nature of business interests/free market economics and Protestantism. These authors often connect the amalgamation of business interests and Christian interests to the rise of the Religious Right and the conservative turn in U.S. politics. Kirk's analysis, however, represents one of the first to focus on the 1850-1920s rather than the mid-century.

During the late 1800s, most religious revivalists viewed businessmen as corrupt, greedy, and irreligious. Unfortunately, Kirk notes, modern scholars also assume corrupt business/religion connections by presupposing an inverse correlation between the rise of consumerism and a presumed decrease of Protestantism (and religious perspectives in general). In this perspective, businessmen used religious language or "gimmicks" in order to sell their products. However, this historical perspective devalues the work performed by religious practitioners in bringing their perspectives to bear on the public sector. Kirk is particularly interested in turn-of-the-century Christian moral reform projects during the urban crisis and increased immigration from Europe.

In response to a rapidly changing U.S. landscape, Protestants felt fear. An influx of immigrants caused explosive growth in unprepared urban centers. While many at the time interpreted urban growth as a sign of progress and technological wonder, Protestants worried about sprawl, unemployment, crime, poverty, and unsanitary conditions. City work accepted women in the workplace while follow-

ing on the heels of diminished church authority and the decline of family-owned stores in favor of large businesses. All this led to a belief that city life inherently caused moral degradation. But these changes paled in comparison to the fear of increased immigration. Immigrants between the 1820s-1920s challenged the Protestant majority and brought unassimilated workers into sprawling, poverty-stricken urban landscapes. In response, fearful Protestant preachers called for a "moral awakening" (Kirk, 7-10).

Kirk's argument centers around her notion of "aesthetic evangelism" as a response to rampant Protestant fear. She describes aesthetic evangelism as the way "Protestants intentionally mobilized architecture, fashion, art, and music to promote morality and conversion" (Kirk, 12). Social reform programs in response to urban growth and increased immigration sought to train/discipline people to be morally upright. Kirk uses Benedict Anderson's theory of real and imagined communities to describe this process. The "real" community of Evangelical churches "moved away from a sudden conversion model to one of religious formation over time." Protestants could now quantify their religiosity and level of sanctification via outside determinants, especially "good taste." Thus, taste became indicative of piety. This practice created an imagined "pan-Protestant community rooted in a nostalgic, idealized vision of rural small-town life remembered as moral, virtuous, orderly, and supported by neighbor's supervision" (Kirk, 10-11). As Protestants standardized "good taste" as an indicator of moral uprightness they produced an "American Protestant Christian ethos" (Kirk, 7). People who were able to display good taste and decorum as defined by Protestant reformers received social capital and thus greater social mobility. As a result, while Protestants touted their reform movements as immigrant uplift, instead they only served to increase the divide between classes and cement institutionalized white Protestant supremacy.

John Wanamaker also participated in these social reform movements. He did so in traditional ways, working to develop the YMCA for instance. However, Wanamaker saw his department store franchise as a method of social reform as well. He used aesthetic evangelism by merging his business and Protestant faith, physically demonstrating this comingling in the form of his department store. Wanamaker used his store to educate, discipline, and orient his clientele towards his perception of good taste and thus piety. Additionally, items of good taste could be purchased in Wanamaker department stores. Thus, developing proper exteriors as indicators of reformed and orderly interiors worked to bolster the rise of consumer department store culture. Through his hiring, development of space and who could access it, and educational programs Wanamaker also helped to define this increased religiosity along white and middle-class lines. In short, Wanamaker used his business as an instrument of religion to affect cultural change.

In her first chapter, Kirk introduces Wanamaker, placing him in his cultural and historical milieu. She narrates Wanamaker's traditional religious reform movements and business endeavors while also detailing his business philosophy, the chapter culminating with his idea to build the Wanamaker Building in

Philadelphia. Chapters two through five examine the new Wanamaker Building and orient around Kirk's concept of aesthetic evangelism. Kirk also fills each chapter with important historical asides covering a plethora of topics such as the rise of European and U.S. department stores, Evangelical reform movements, the City Beautiful movement, and the onset of modernist architecture. These asides demonstrate the breadth of her project and its potential for interdisciplinarity.

Chapter two begins with the architecture of his huge new department store. Wanamaker controlled the building process, from its layout to its building materials, all of which were carefully chosen to convert and uplift onlookers. Through the "built environment of the city…" Wanamaker hoped his building would "[inspire] responsible, disciplined, and moral behavior by [the store's] mere presence" (Kirk, 87). Like the bodies of his workers or clients whose respectable outsides spoke to pious insides, Wanamaker made the exterior architecture of his building mirror the righteous and pious business strategies within. Christian business strategies, pioneered in his Oak Hall department store, treated customers well, did not cheat their clients as often happened in less reputable stores, guaranteed their products, and in general used "the golden rule" i n their transactions. Afterward, these principles would characterize department stores in the U.S.

Chapter three introduces Wanamaker's employee education program. Kirk looks specifically at the white male children, women, and African-American workers that Wanamaker hired. At over 10,000 workers, Wanamaker was forced to hire working-class people who did not display the type of "middle- class" taste he required. Thus, Wanamaker used several tools to train, educate, and discipline his workforce, including a school, uniforms, report cards, the Wanamaker Cadets, and a camp for young, white, boys. Through these educational initiatives, Wanamaker not only hoped to raise good employees who were uninterested in unions and were efficient, diligent, and honest, but in a reversal of "Christian nurture" (a philosophy which states that Christian families can nurture moral children) he believed his employed children could convert their families to proper virtue at home (Kirk, 93). The Wanamaker school permitted advancement for white boys while denying advancement for black employees who were stuck at low-skill, low-wage labor. Thus, Wanamaker made a store whose racial demographics protected societal hierarchies and forcibly made a "safe space" (read "white-space") for white, middle- class clientele. Wanamaker employees became "walking advertisements" and "liturgists" for his Christian form of business (Kirk, 123).

Chapter four introduces Wanamaker's art collection, mostly curated from Europe, especially Paris. The store was not only a place to consume goods but also to consume art and culture in, what Wanamaker considered to be, its highest forms. In rotating exhibits throughout the store, educational booklets guided the onlooker, teaching them how to interpret the art in ways that might increase their morality. This art tended towards religious imagery and romantic nature scenes, only furthering the Protestant perspective that the city degraded morality even as nature/agriculturalism elevated it.

Finally, chapter five continues with the interiors of the stores, particularly the layout of its great atriums, its organ, and the way Wanamaker transformed these arenas for religious and civic holidays. The atriums, rotundas, and halls were meant to evoke cathedrals, instilling a sense of awe, wonder, religious and civic virtue. Ironically, this period of Protestantism borrowed from Catholic neo-gothic architecture and grandness to provoke a "nostalgic version of Christianity that linked a romantic "ancient" Christianity with patriotism and consumption…[a] pan-Christian imagery" (Kirk, 201) only adding to the imagined Pan-Christian community Kirk references in her introduction.

In the end, Wanamaker did not acknowledge a sacred/secular dichotomy. He managed both fluidly. Wanamaker saw his business ventures as a type of religious evangelism that could convert, what he believed to be, a chaotic and dangerous society into an orderly, righteous, and respectable one. This image of taste and decorum helped to define whiteness and support racial and masculine hierarchy at the turn of the century. For Wanamaker, consumption could be society-altering and holy.

Creatively Creating the Theme Park "Ark Encounter"

Changing tack from an historical perspective to an anthropological one, James Bielo's book *Ark Encounter: The Making of a Creationist Theme Park* also examines the connection between religion and consumerism. His fourth book, *Ark Encounter* represents a further development of Bielo's work of exploring the social life of scriptures, that is—how scriptures are made to perform actively in the world. Bielo has been on the forefront of this exciting development within the larger field of the anthropology of Christianity. In this latest addition to the field, *Ark Encounter* expands the social life of scripture to include materialization. Materializing the Bible refers to "transforming written scripture into an experiential, choreographed environment" (Bielo, 4, 19). His work exemplifies how scholars interested in the interpretation of scriptures can move beyond analyzing only the sacred text used by their subjects. Instead, scholars must recognize that their subjects, that is interlocutors of sacred scriptures, use those scriptures not only in textual form but often render it manifest in the material realm as well. Specifically in *Ark Encounter*, Bielo demonstrates how a Fundamentalist interpretation of the Genesis text is made material in a theme park. Bielo's examination of creationism in this book is also unique because he studies creationism and materialism through a "religion-entertainment" lens rather than the more common "religion-science" dichotomy (Bielo, 11).

Bielo's first chapter orients his book around three key themes that enable materialization in the theme park: devotional consumption, entertainment as play mediated through immersion and affect, and religious publicity. Devotional consumption refers to the way religious practitioners, and Christians more expressly, "have sought to sacralize their consumption of cultural goods, transforming purely economic or functional activity into something integrated into the moral and

spiritual fabric of life" (Bielo, 20). Importantly, melding consumption to spiritual objects does not demean the spiritual. Instead, it uplifts the banal. "Devotional consumption," says Bielo, "reveals more about the creativity of religious actors…than it does categorical contamination" (Bielo, 21). By filling the market with "faith-based alternatives" Christians reclaim commodities from "secular" institutions, transform and convert the marketplace, and challenge the stereotype that a Christian material item (such as music, a book, or a theme park) need be of poor quality. Instead, a Christian good can compete with, if not exceed, the quality of a secular good (Bielo, 21-22).

Second, Bielo looks to entertainment and play theory, more specifically the role of immersion in creating an "entertaining" experience. "[I]mmersion excels at generating affective attachments to the past" (Bielo, 25). *Ark Encounter* uses immersion in order to produce affective responses leading toward devotion and conversion through fun and play.

Finally, Bielo discusses the importance of religious publicity, a term coined by fellow anthropologist Matthew Engelke. Religious actors seek out and disseminate information in public spheres. In the case of the Ark Encounter, the goal for this religious publicity is two-fold: first, it is to have fun. Second, it allows creationists, who represent a "counterpublic," that is a heterodox perspective, to "[vie] for authority." Ark Encounter can "sow suspicion about the cultural legitimacy of evolutionary science and bolster the status of fundamentalist Christianity" (Bielo, 29). In short, the Fundamentalist perspective of the Bible can be materialized in this public theme park designed around devotional consumption that is fun, immersive, and affective and thus entertaining. If the park is of high quality in the way it delivers this entertaining experience, creationists can claim authority and legitimacy for their worldview in a public setting. This is not done through scientific, intellectual, or even devotional dialogue. It is performed through fun, immersive entertainment.

Each of Bielo's next chapters hinge on these theoretical ideas. However, each chapter also adds a new theoretical lens by which to examine the chapter's particular issue. Chapter two puts Ark Encounter as a theme park in conversation with the global phenomenon of Bible-style parks. He postulates that these entertaining public spaces exist to solve the "virtual problem" of Christianity (Bielo 36). Namely, Christians recognize that their religion is inaccessible—that is to say, it took place long ago in a geographically different location in a language and culture unlike the modern U.S. Materializing the Bible reduces that inaccessibility through a construction of historical continuity. Materializing the Bible/securing continuity performs two functions for practitioners: it builds an intimacy with sacred scripture and provides access to an inaccessible biblical past. Bielo calls this a "performance of authenticity" (Bielo, 52). The words of the Bible (its materialization) become transmedial, that is, not simply words on a page, but embodied by different mediums such as a flowering garden or an enormous ark.

Chapters three through five deal expressly with Ark Encounter and how the artistic creators actualize the Bible transmedially by creating intimacy and access to the creationist biblical past. Chapter three begins by examining the team and studio space. By examining the space, place, and people of production Bielo focuses his analysis on the creation of religious cultural materials rather than their circulation or consumption (a far more common analysis, see Bielo, 59). Bielo sees cultural production as a dialogical relationship between producer (in this case, the artistic team) and the consumer, which he calls dialogic creativity (Bielo, 61). The chapter demonstrates that the team constantly thought about who was consuming their product, how a consumer might interpret it, and how their production could be changed in order to evoke the type of affect and immersion they desired. Bielo has multiple sections of Geertzian deep description in this chapter. In analyzing six different creative strategies, the scholarly reader may be surprised at the lack of devotional language, the interest in secular producers like Hollywood and Disney, the general lack of religious paraphernalia, and the amount of tedium and bureaucratic pushback for the designers.

Chapter four is concerned with the assumed consumer of the park and how the artistic team created an immersive environment for play and (through the tactics of entertainment) possible conversion. Playing in the ark demonstrates plausibility of the creationist past and affective experience of the creationist past for a doubting public. Taken together, Bielo calls this conversion strategy plausibility-immersion. Through an immersive environment, this strategy shows how the ark could have happened, reducing the doubt of the onlooker.

Interestingly, plausibility-immersion does not rely on faith, intellectual, scientific, or historical arguments. Instead, it relies on the dialogical relationship of creator and consumer, performed through roleplay. By allowing the public to experience and interact with/in Noah's world, the viewer leaves room for plausibility. The team achieves this plausibility-immersion strategy using several tools including: immediate immersion (from the moment people can see the theme park to the last drive away), authenticity (including waste extraction for the ark), and complex world-building (using, for example, Tolkien, George R.R. Martin, A.A. Milne, and Mel Gibson).

In chapter five, Bielo explores history-making as an act of power, and one readily adopted by the artists of Ark Encounter. Creationists do not "inhabit the same temporal landscape as non-creationists" (Bielo, 132). Seeing history-making in Bourdieuian terms, creationism exists as a heterodox belief against the orthodox evolutionary perspective. Ark Encounter serves as safe space for heterodox beliefs, but it does more than this. The sophisticated quality of the entertainment factor of the park challenges the idea that creationism needs to be herterodox at all. Bielo calls this "playing in the heterodox past." Cultural Power is suddenly "up for grabs" through "edutainment" (Bielo, 136-138).

Finally, chapter six details what happens when people walk through the ark. All consumers, even non-believers, are encouraged to use a Fundamentalist

gaze, that is, "a way of seeing that reifies creationist truth claims and re-creates the movement's moral critique of evolutionary science" (Bielo, 142). The physical choreography of walking through the ark also creates a "poetics of faith." Participants are lead through the exhibit, encouraged to "fill in intertextual gaps between scripture and the creative teams' artistic imagination" (Bielo, 143).

Bielo's excellent, in-depth analysis about the production of the Ark Encounter theme park provides the reader with rich ethnographic descriptions and an even richer theoretical trove. Each chapter introduces new theoretical lenses while continually returning to the main point of materialization of the Bible through entertainment, affect, and immersion in a public sphere. Bielo's book provides fodder for further analysis of Christian entertainment.

Playing with Noah in Wanamaker's Temple

These books have five major points of intersection which demonstrate their importance in the field of American Studies and how the analysis of religion can be used to produce a more complex image of the public sphere. First, they both challenge typical scholarly angles in order to develop more complex lenses. For Kirk, scholars typically argue that business/consumption waters down or damages religion or that the two are inherently opposed. Therefore, those who wed business/consumption and religion are using the latter to increase the former. Similarly, Bielo notes that most scholars approach the study of creationism via the science-religion standpoint, and further, that they see the commodification of religion as a secularizing process. Kirk and Bielo both demonstrate that religion as expressed through and within business and entertainment ventures are actually processes of immersion or total life commitment to religious faith. Wanamaker made his business ventures an aspect of his Christian social reform while those at Ark Encounter use consumerism to convert a secular marketplace. The point is that many cultural scholars cling to a sacred/secular dichotomy without noticing that Christian practitioners do not acknowledge this dichotomy for themselves. These new lenses provided by Kirk and Bielo, whether of aesthetic evangelism, religious publicity, or dialogical creativity, cause us to reconsider some of the most foundational assumptions regarding religion in the public sphere. Both scholars find something new (or add to the continuing scholarship) within the history of Christianity in the United States: Bielo finds creative creationists, and Kirk finds pious businessmen.

Both books also are about materializing faith within religious publics. This addition of "faith" is my own and neither scholar describes their work in exactly this way. Bielo makes clear that he sees materializing the Bible as part of his larger project of the anthropology of Christianity and social scriptures. It is also an aspect of Vincent Wimbush's scriptualizing. Both terms refer to how religious adherents make their scriptures act and produce in the world. By adding material elements to this analysis, the question becomes not just how people make their scriptures mean and do, but also how practitioners make those scriptural words

into real, tangible things. That is, how words and the meaning of those words are rendered into material form especially to produce a particular interpretation.

Kirk, on the other hand, does not deal with Christian scriptures at all. However, Wanamaker does make his faith intersect with taste and middle-class virtue. Through his store, art, décor and interiors, Wanamaker made that faith material. I generalize Bielo's concept of materializing the Bible to incorporate Kirk's perspective of aesthetic evangelism by talking about materializing faith, that is pronouncing one's faith through the material and the real to be "read," understood, and importantly, taught to and by others. Through this materialization process, religious faith creates cultural change and (in these cases) enforce power structures.

Third, both authors rely on immersion and authenticity as a key element of this materializing process. While Kirk does not use play theory or immersion as theoretical lenses, Ark Encounter and the Wanamaker building both perform similar tasks. Wanamaker also invited his consumers to roleplay in highly choreographed areas, especially through window-shopping (imagining themselves donning goods that would render them "respectable"), through art galleries from salons in Paris, and through opulent atriums, listening to organ music. Viewers in the neo-gothic-style atriums imagining a pan-Christian community and history in the 1900s were similar to viewers in the modern gigantic ark, imagining the creationist past as actual and orthodox. As clientele walked through and viewed art galleries, they were also performing a guided poetics of faith just as clients at Ark Encounter walk through stations within the ark. While Kirk does not use the theories of immersion that Bielo does, reading the two together, a reader can be struck by the similarity of Wanamaker's use of immersion for the education of his guests in his galleries, holiday décor, atriums, and auditoriums that Bielo's artistic staff used.

Fourth, both books deal with the important task of educating the public. Kirk's use of aesthetic evangelism works both for her description of Wanamaker but also for Bielo's analysis of immersion and entertainment. Wanamaker's purpose to educate the public on propriety and decorum resulted in social capital for its practitioners. Ark Encounter's goal is conversion, meant to educate and even convince (or at least throw doubt upon belief) for non-Christians and non-creationist Christians alike. This education also provides social capital, but instead of providing it to the population generally (as was Wanamaker's hope), Ark Encounter instead hopes to provide social capital for heterodox creationists. Because of the high quality of their "edutainment" theme park, the creators are able to show that Christian entertainment can not only be good, but as good as non-Christian forms.

Fifth, Kirk and Bielo both talk about the creation of safe space through aesthetic evangelism or Bielo's concept of immersion. Ark Encounter creates safe space for the creationist and a challenge to the skeptic. Wanamaker also created safe space for white and middle-class buyers. This safety is given a divine component as both books understand that Wanamaker and Ark Encounter's

creative team were "co-creators" with God. As co-creators with God, a safe space becomes divine. Interestingly, while Ark Encounter creates a space for conversation around heterodox beliefs, it does not succeed in changing the cultural norm. Creationist perspectives remain heterodox. However, Wanamaker's movement to teach and inculcate middle-class norms and virtues did become orthodox. It cemented a classist and racist way of being in the city, separating uneducated people, poor people, and immigrants.

Both books are excellently researched and written. There are a few areas that could be improved. For Kirk, a deeper analysis of the connection between middle-class values and Christianity, or at least the unique ways Wanamaker connected them, would have been useful. It makes sense that values relate to Christianity, but she is not clear exactly how that connection occurred. An examination of rhetoric, especially scriptural rhetoric, would have increased this point. In the same vein, the biographies of Wanamaker that Kirk uses in her first chapter are rich sources that offer insights into how Wanamaker saw himself. However, Kirk does not always interrogate the truthfulness of these sources. Examining the rhetoric of these early biographies could have added further depth to Kirk's argument since, like a modern hagiography, they portray exactly the form of good taste, middle-class values, and religious business and consumerism that they believed Wanamaker emulated. Finally, I was curious how much Kirk's discussion of architecture or art was simply a product of modernism. Could her analysis give way to a larger argument about the innate effect of Christianity on modernist art and architecture?

In Bielo's case, I found myself questioning the role of Orientalism in imaging Noah's past. Morocco was an inspiration for the artistic portrayal of Noah's home (Bielo, 14, 65), and "Middle East"-inspired music play for onlookers at the exhibit (Bielo, 159). When artists sought to portray a pre-historical Biblical past, they reached for a highly Orientalized and stylized portrayal of the modern Middle East, whose current artistic look has more to do with Muslim architecture and history. This speaks to these creative creationists' inability to imagine a biblical past without pre-modern and modern Islamic history, and yet, that Islamic history is also actively denied and devalued.

During Bielo's sixth chapter as he discussed walking through the ark exhibit, I was moved to consider the complex interconnection between the creationist past and the creationist present—that is, what happens when the two meet? Throughout the exhibit, Noah and his family are portrayed as just like their Christian viewers. The artistic creation of immersion and the viewer's roleplay rely on the present to define the past. But it means that the creationist's present is bolstered by their vision of the past. For instance, gender roles in labor or praying at the table (Bielo, 146-149) are part of the modern Christian present, but the ark exhibit shows Noah's family doing these things in the past. By placing modern Christian practices and beliefs in the biblical past as if they were native to that temporal arena leaves a Christian creationist on looker seeing validity in their current Christian manifestations. But this goes for sin as well:

Bielo tells an anecdote of a mother and her daughters looking at a portrayal of the sinfulness of Noah's time. One man is drunk and passed out. The mother remarks to her giggling daughter, "there's nothing new under the sun" (Bielo, 166). This is critically important for thinking about how the artistic team sees the present as a recreation of the past. While Noah's past is different, it cannot be so different from our present. This creates a dialogical relationship between the actualized past and present mediated through the onlooker, and it is integral to materializing the Bible.

Finally, Bielo does not consider race or gender in creating safe spaces for creationists. As Bielo walked through Ark Encounter, how many faces that walked through with him were white? How did race figure into conversations with the creative team, or did it at all? These questions are largely left unanswered in Bielo's analysis. However, these questions may have been outside the scope of his work. Ark Encounter serves as a jumping-off point for future scholars of American Studies and American Religion to ask these next questions about Orientalism, gender, and race.

Conclusion

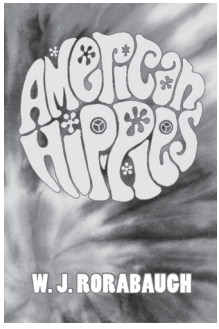
By finding new lenses that incorporate religious analysis rather than denying religious knowledges, perspectives, and realities, we can understand American culture and identity more deeply. Bielo's creative team are direct recipients of Wanamaker's philosophy (Bielo, 21). By reading both books together, we see a perspective from the late 1800s to 1920, and then see where religious/business/consumption has gone in 2018.

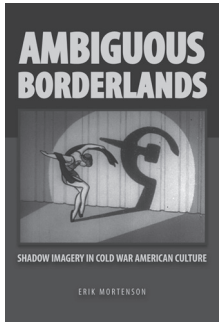
American Studies must put aside its blinders and engage with the fact that faith is a real component in people's lives. Even further, American Studies must be willing to accept that faith, while perhaps an oppressive force, has also been a creative one. It is a language spoken fluently and freely by people throughout the Americas. Scholars can examine how business, entertainment, race, class, and gender can be bound up together with religious practitioners' (re)creation of and in our history. These two books invite their scholarly readers to play, imagine, and immerse themselves in the creativity of religious cultural manufacturers.

Review Essay

The United States of Hippies

Roger Chapman





AMERICAN HIPPIES. By W. J. Rorabaugh. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2015.
AMBIGUOUS BORDERLANDS: Shadow Imagery in Cold War American Culture. By Erik Mortenson. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. 2016.

> Hey Jack, now for the tricky part,
> when you were the brightest star who were the shadows?
> —Natalie Merchant, "Hey Jack Kerouac" (1987)
>
> Every picture has its shadows
> And it has some source of light
> —Joni Mitchell, "Shadows and Light" (1975)

The hippies were seemingly everywhere in the 1960s and 1970s, but in actuality their sense of presence in American society was greater than their number. The term "hippie" can be honorable, pejorative, or flippant, all depending on context and speaker. Everyone knows what is meant when "hippie" is uttered,

0026-3079/2018/5802-019$2.50/0 American Studies, 58:2 (2019): 19–30

but the truth is no one precisely knows. According to W. J. Rorabaugh, in his very readable *American Hippies*, the hippie counterculture movement not only made a lasting impression on American culture, but it largely remains a work in progress. What the author hopes to convey is the hippie aspect of hippies; in other words, their diversity and complexity. Of course, it would be less than hippie for hippies to be uniform and standard. Rorabaugh approaches the topic with just the right flow, avoiding bogs of minutia, and he is to be congratulated for doing so while making use of archival material (including a finely selected array of photographs of the period). Appropriately for the "blast to the past," there are footnotes as opposed to endnotes. The organizational structure of *American Hippies* divides hippie culture into two broad categories: hedonism/spiritualism (covering drugs and music) and politics (covering the antiwar movement, the politically engaged/politically disengaged, and libertarianism).

American Hippies is comprised of five chapters, plus an introduction, conclusion, and index. In chapter one, the origins of the hippie movement is explained; and reasons are offered for why the counterculture movement is important history to study: first, it was a major contributor to the cultural upheavals of the 1960s, including concern for social justice, civil rights, black power, feminism, environmentalism, and socially liberal politics. Second, for a period of time it held hundreds of thousands of young people in its sway. Third, its past is not past. Drugs, music, and spirituality are the topic of chapter two, and the keywords are "individualism" and "authenticity." The third chapter is devoted to the sexual revolution, emphasizing the advent of the birth control pill, the love of the naturalness of the naked human body, the natural "male wildness" (97) of beards and long hair, and also the imbalance of free love that led some female hippies, (the future feminists), "to reconsider whether the counterculture was nothing more than the creation of a male fantasy world at the expense of women" (130).

Chapter four explores the political aspects of the counterculture movement, while communes are the topic of chapter five. Readers of wry humor will be amused by how communes were often places of refuge for hippies escaping the burdens of hedonism, but having all things in common did not extend to record albums. Communes allowed hippies space for exercising one of their important values: community. Hippies such as the freaks were apolitical; others, like the diggers, were socialistic. There was a tension between hippies and the New Left—Todd Gitlin, for instance, faulted hippies for their "frivolity" (133)—but in actuality the yippies, though claiming "no ideology" while promoting a "cultural revolution" (153), were in accord with the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and its opposition to the Vietnam War. Overall, Bruce Schulman is correct in his observation: "political protest and countercultural sensibilities went hand in hand."[1] Hippies, it is self-evident, were too loose and free to subscribe to the dogmatic Marxism that typically animated lefties; indeed, the hippie embrace of anarchism and its skepticism of government anticipated the libertarian movement. In his conclusion, though conceding that the hippie legacy in American culture is ambiguous, Rorabaugh points to the counterculture's lasting impact with re-

spect to sexual practices, recreational drugs, music, fashion, individualism, and multiculturalism. Rorabaugh suggests that the values of the hippie movement are "still percolating" and "still evolving" (225).

This reviewer was sad *American Hippies* left Richard Brautigan out of its narrative. Brautigan was a bridge between Beats and hippies. On the cover of Brautigan's *Trout Fishing in America* there is a black and white photograph of the author with his female muse and they are posing in front of the Benjamin Franklin statue in San Francisco's Washington Square Park.[2] The cover photograph is by Erik Weber. The woman in the photo, Michaela Blake-Grand, is sitting on a stool at the feet of the standing Brautigan. She is wearing hippie attire and is seemingly striking a submissive demeanor. This harmonizes with Rorabaugh's observation about female hippies not starting out as feminists. If we adhere to Rorabaugh's historical reckoning, Brautigan's best novella was prior to the advent of hippies. The photograph was taken in 1967, the same year *Trout Fishing* was first published, and at the time when the hippie movement was well underway. But the manuscript of *Trout Fishing* was written in 1960 and 1961, prior to the hippie era.[3] Separating Beats from hippies, progenitors from hippie practitioners, is messy and is probably why many refer to the counterculture movement in a broad manner. Others just say "The Sixties," and not always as a compliment.

In one of his long ago humorless columns, George Will announced, "The Sixties are now nostalgia, kitsch junk among the clutter in the nation's mental attic."[4] Attitudes like that, coupled with Tom Brokaw's adoration of the WWII generation as being the greatest, has led to some spirited defense of the age that included a hippie identity.[5] The spiritual aspect of the counterculture movement is often overlooked by those who regard the era as nothing more than the Me Decade. But Jackson Lears is correct when he observes, "'Religion' may be too solemn a word for many 1960s radicals, but it helps to capture the depth of their motives: above all their longing for a more direct, authentic experience of the world than the one on offer in mid-century American society."[6] The astronaut James Lovell, the commander of Apollo 8, was "sort of soured" by the hippie movement, but it was the photograph of planet Earth taken during that mission that became a symbol of the counterculture movement and took on a religious dimension. The Earth shot adorned the front and back cover of the hippie *Whole Earth Catalog*. Over time Lovell himself would use the hippie term "spaceship Earth," a demonstration of how the counterculture influenced the mainstream.[7] In the American culture wars, where binary constructs of argumentation have been carried out with Manichean simplicity[8]—what James Davison Hunter refers to as a conflict of "different moral visions"[9]—conservatives look back fondly on the 1950s while blaming the nation's woes on the 1960s. In the attempt to "make peace" with the 1960s some have ended up waging war against it, such as David Burner.[10]

The Republican ascendancy that led to the Reagan era was in part a reaction against the counterculture movement.[11] Newt Gingrich, who should know better because he has a PhD in history and was a professor prior to becoming

a politician, once asserted that the "whole country" has repudiated the legacies of the 1960s.[12] (Gingrich, as Bill Clinton points out, "built a movement out of a caricature of the Sixties."[13]) Philip Jenkins argues that the mainstreaming of the 1960s was an integral part of American culture by the 1970s and served as a transitory "nightmare" period that gave birth to the 1980s, which he regards as a corrective.[14] The rise of the Religious Right was in part a reaction to the counterculture movement, but it can also be noted that, beginning with the Jesus People movement, hippie values of individualism, feelings, authenticity, and so on have permeated many conservative Christian ministries.[15] The abiding Christian homeschool movement is a spinoff of the anti-establishment mentality of hippies; the first homeschoolers were children of hippies, not evangelicals.[16]

If one is looking for a new angle on hippies, then Rorabaugh's compact volume will disappoint, though it is probably too harsh to call the work "repackaged tired tropes," as one reviewer does.[17] Since many general readers have vague and stereotypical views of hippies, such a readable text on the subject is a public service. *American Hippies* should be regarded as a ride on a tour bus—though calmer than an acid trip with the "Merry Band of Pranksters" on Ken Kesey's bouncing International Harvester school bus—with the author only intending to offer a generalized, but responsibly sifted, account. The expressed ambiguity in *American Hippies* was earlier offered by Mark Hamilton Lytle: "Since hippies seldom articulated their values, their cultural critique had to be inferred from their behavior."[18] In certain respects, any analysis of the counterculture movement is like what Maurice Isserman once sheepishly admitted about scholarship on the New Left: "I am willing to concede that we've probably reached the point of diminishing returns in retelling the adventures of … the old [SDS] gang."[19] *American Hippies* would make for an excellent complement to any bibliography for a course focusing on the 1960s; both undergraduates and graduates would benefit having it as assigned reading and it would provide the foundation for deeper study elsewhere.[20] While it is true the work's overall conclusion is nothing new—other sources do recount hippie legacies[21]—it is nonetheless focused and uncluttered.

By including the Beats as part of his exploration of postwar shadow imagery, Erik Mortenson does offer some material that has an indirect connection to hippies. *Ambiguous Borderlands* is a work that examines a narrow aspect of Cold War culture, delving in such a deep manner that the project tends to be esoteric. Mortenson is not necessarily concerned with hippies, but rather he seeks to explain the shadow imagery and the metaphorical usage of shadows in postwar popular culture. Since shadows "offer an alternative space where social assumptions could be reconsidered, questioned, and even challenged" (4), it could be suggested that the hippie movement was a shadow that fell across America. "The ambiguous shadow is a fitting image for the uncertainty of the Cold War," Mortenson writes (20), and these shadows were "fearful, sometimes inviting, always compelling" (22). The shadow that hung over civilization was that of atomic weaponry, but the danger was buried in the minds of most people.[22] "Ignored but not forgotten,

the bomb was repressed as a disturbing fact but not thought about," Mortenson explains. "It is just these sorts of latent anxieties existing on the mind's periphery that the shadow best succeeds in capturing. Shadows thus become a Geiger counter, a means of registering this fear and uncertainty without … explicitly naming the bomb" (25).

Ambiguous Borderlands is comprised of six chapters, plus an introduction and conclusion. The work includes endnotes, a bibliography, and index. Distributed throughout are over twenty photographs, including Andy Warhol's mischievous *Hammer and Sickle* (comprised of an image of a hammer and sickle casting a heavy shadow). Mortenson offers deep analysis on (1) The Shadow, the crime-fighting figure of comic books and radio shows, which originated in the 1930s but in the postwar years was co-opted by writers such as Jack Kerouac, Sylvia Plath, and LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka; (2) the "Shrouded Stranger" in the works of Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg; (3) the street photography of Robert Frank, William Klein, and Ralph Eugene Meatyard; (4) the late film noir of the early Cold War period; and (5) Rod Sterling's *The Twilight Zone* television series.

The first chapter gives an account of the anxiety due to the advent of the atomic age. The next two chapters focus on The Shadow and how it was used as material by Kerouac, Plath, and Baraka. Mortenson notes, "It is no coincidence that all of these writers published their Shadow-inspired works in 1959, at what many consider the height of the Cold War" (15). The author's analysis here is questionable because publication is never instantaneous; there is delay between the catalyst of the inspiration and the dissemination of the final work to the public date. Obviously, the mentioned writings were drafted prior to 1959, prior to the "height of the Cold War." So the 1959 date may be coincidence. Moreover, the height of the Cold War is generally understood to be 1962, specifically the Cuban Missile Crisis. (Similarly, Frank's photographic book *The Americans*, with a preface by Kerouac, was published in the United States in 1959, which was preceded by a 1955 exhibit, which was preceded by the actual taking of the photographs.) That aside, Mortenson sees The Shadow as belonging to the childhood memories of these authors, but afterwards coming to symbolize the end of childhood innocence. Archival material is dug up to bolster the analysis of how the Beats—Kerouac and Ginsberg—sought to "map the occluded spaces of the American unconscious through an appeal to a world of dream, ghosts, and shadows" and thereby "opened up a space to challenge the binary thinking of their times that relegated doubt to a dark and buried world" (92). Kerouac and Ginsberg used the "Shrouded Stranger" as a vehicle for exploring themselves, their sense of reality, as well as experimenting with new art forms, but some readers will find this commentary a bit opaque.

In harmony with Mortenson, Rorabaugh writes, "The Beats believed everything was rotten. The starting point for this thesis was World War II, the Holocaust, the atomic bomb, and the Cold War, all of which alarmed Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Burroughs" (22). Later, people like Ken Kesey "sneered at the Cold War" (45). But Kerouac turned against the counterculture movement that followed

his moment in the sun; when he was in the shadows, he sneered, "After Me, the Dulge," the title of his last piece of paid writing.[23] As noted by Rorabaugh, Kerouac "hated the flashy Sixties as the antithesis of the cool Beat Fifties" (46). "For whatever reason, jazz did not work with LSD" (52) and as some of the old Beats became Merry Pranksters and turned to the acid rock of the Grateful Dead, the flash Kerouac loathed was symbolized by the strobe light William Burroughs had perfected so that its pulsing would better promote the LSD experience. Such flashing light, obviously, produced shadows. By 1969, Kerouac was dead, another statistic of alcoholism. As a legacy, he left *Dr. Sax* (1959), what Mortenson labels "a Cold War book" (81), with its main figure knowing the underlying aspect, the shadow, of postwar American culture.

Mortenson considers how Plath, who uses the words "shade" or "shadow" some sixty-four times in her *Collected Poems*, made use of The Shadow character in her short story "The Shadow." An exploration of lost innocence, "The Shadow" includes a narrator who likes listening to radio programs involving the Green Hornet, Wonder Woman, Superman, Mickey Mouse, and, of course, The Shadow. The narrator is enthralled by the cynical motif of *The Shadow* program: "Who knows what Evil lurks in the hearts of men? … The Shadow knows, heh, heh, heh, heh" (67). In the story, the brutality of Japanese WWII prison camps are referred to, but this gives way to the reality of civilian air raid shelters and the possibility of German Americans being interned. Mortenson admits that this story could be used to pinpoint Plath's descent into depression, but he thinks it speaks of something larger culturally. Plath's story, he believes, highlights the hypocrisy aspect of the Cold War. He goes on to analyze how Plath utilized certain imagery in *The Bell Jar* (1963). The atomic bomb was in the back of her mind and one of her characters even expresses joy over the Rosenbergs being sentenced to death. "Inverting the tropes of light and darkness, Plath finds meaning in the shadows," concludes Mortenson, adding, "Darkness, not light, becomes the bearer of truth" (72). In the darkness was the truth of the injustice and the hypocrisy, whether the WWII internment camps or postwar McCarthyism. The author highlights the iconic quote from *The Bell Jar*:

> I thought the most beautiful thing in the world must be shadow, the million moving shapes and cul-de-sacs of shadow. There was shadow in bureau drawers and closets and suitcases, and shadow under houses and trees and stones, and shadow at the back of people's eyes and smiles, and shadow, miles and miles and miles of it, on the night side of the earth. (69)

Other authors have considered Plath's usage of shadows, such as Al Strangeways,[24] but Mortenson's emphasis is on how she was not working in isolation. Plath was operating within a structure of feeling of her time period. Connecting Plath with Kerouac and Ginsberg is somewhat surprising, but there is also the poet Baraka who in *Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note* "likewise draws on the shad-

owy presence of the crime fighter to question American racial conditions" (84). The commentary of the literary analysis that follows is thick and many readers will likely lack patience for reading every word, but at the end of this section Mortenson reiterates how the writings co-opting The Shadow "were penned under another shadow—the shadow of the Cold War" and "they necessarily disclose the social as well as the personal" (90).

The Shadow was a character of a radio program, and was a magazine figure only in a secondary manner, meaning the character was most dramatically presented in an auditory fashion and not a visual one. The emphasis on the laughter of the character suggests the importance of the radio program, the audio over the textual. Kerouac was known for often imitating the "*Mweh! heh! heh! ha! ha!*" laughter of The Shadow, which underscores his familiarity with the auditory aspect of the character.[25] When one thinks of a shadow, though, it seems that the visual would be paramount. Perhaps the imagination of the listener is enough to make the shadow seem real, but since the remainder of Mortenson's analysis is on photography, film, and television programming, the visual does indeed seem to be crucial—every bit as important as the image of the mushroom cloud rather than, say, the sound of a civil defense siren.

If Mortenson's general analysis of the shadow imagery in Cold War popular culture is correct, then we must wonder how the phenomenon should be critiqued. The mushroom cloud is, in certain respects, a part of the scientific community's "rhetorical inventions" of the Cold War. Mortenson does not seem to consider how the artists and producers dealing with shadows may have been acting as "useful idiots," unwittingly contributing to the hegemonic forces at play. The fear and anxiety, it has been argued, led to an ever greater reliance on science. In other words, those who caused the shadows were relied upon to save the world from doom, creating future shadows. This "dual nature" aspect of science—creation of threat and deliverance from threat—depended upon cultural anxiety to perpetuate the endless cycle. As explained by David Titege, "It is little wonder that, in an atmosphere of impending calamity based on the technological horrors we constructed to maintain the survival of our nation, the scientist had found a prominent and vocal place in the public spotlight."[26]

The second half of *Ambiguous Borderlands*—chapters four, five, and six—looks at actual visual shadows; in this case the shadowing in photography, late film noir, and *The Twilight Zone*. Mortenson suggests that early Cold War feelings were expressed in street photography with images of increasing reliance on "shadow, blur, graininess, and reflection" (128) to "properly portray the complexity of a nuclear world" and the Cold War's "disturbing anxieties and paradoxes" (129). "The disintegration of the human figure in postwar photography" is that what would "further humanity" (130), Mortenson intones. Frank's *The Americans* includes a photograph of a barber shop that is seen through the shadow of the photographer and Mortenson argues that such is an example of the ambiguity in postwar photography, which anticipates postmodernism's multiplicity of viewpoints, the negative reaction against the binary thinking of the Cold War. "The

mass of America's citizens are like shadows" is how Mortenson reads Frank's still shots (152). Klein, it is argued, is even more aggressive at rendering his subjects into shadows by using extreme images of blur; but Mortenson seems to not seriously consider the evidence that the negative images of New Yorkers may have more to do with Klein's personal "confrontational attitude" (154) toward his native city than a statement about the Cold War. Instead of taking Klein at his word ("my priority was coming to terms with myself"), Mortenson suggests this photographer is "reticent about the impact of the 1950s on his work" (161). Meatyard, a largely forgotten photographer of Kentucky, is reviewed because of his use of "blurred images and out-of-focus effects" (163). In conclusion, the author asserts, "What Frank, Klein, and Meatyard saw in the human figures was not its inherent universality but a chance to question the boundaries of subjectivity in order to highlight the anxieties of their Cold War age" (170).

Richard Lingeman has suggested that the crime films between 1945 and 1950—otherwise known as "noir culture"—well represent the Cold War and the immediate preceding years. "I believe," Lingeman explains, "film noir are a key for unlocking the psychology, the national mood during those years."[27] Mortenson agrees, pointing to three noir films of the 1950s while explaining how cinema noir "had become more self-conscious" (179) in the face of oppressive containment culture enforced by the Red Scare. In *The Night of the Hunter* (1955) there is a scene in which the corpse of a woman, who had been murdered by a preacher, is on the basement stairs—the basement symbolizing the air raid shelter. In *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955) light brings destruction while shadows offer revelation and clarity; in one scene an impotent/incompetent detective "lies tied face-down to the bed, in shadow" (195); and the story's ending is a nuclear blast after a female, Gabrielle, opens the "great whatsit" valise containing radionuclide. In *Touch of Evil* (1958) borders are a theme and shadows are used by director Orson Welles to accent their liminality and the fear of infiltration while a corrupt detective likely symbolizes McCarthyism. All three films used shadow effects to explore "the inconsistencies and paradoxes that defined the postwar world" (215). Mortenson's last offering is a look at Sterling's *The Twilight Zone* (1959-1964), which utilized a combination of film noir and science fiction genres. Considered "one of the greatest television series ever produced" (219), Sterling's program is seen as offering a critique of the Cold War and this is important because it was brought into family living rooms. The term "twilight zone" entered into popular culture because of the show, "a phrase describing an indeterminate, ambiguous space where the normal does not apply and the uncanny reigns" (240); it was a term that none other than Robert McNamara used when describing the communist menace. Mortenson's discussion on late film noir and *The Twilight Zone* is more convincing than his earlier exegesis of literature and photography.

Some of the insights offered by *Ambiguous Borderlands* triggered an undergraduate memory of this reviewer: a meeting during the 1980s with Rod Jellema, the University of Maryland poet and professor of creative writing. The poet was at the time enjoying a modicum of heyday, basking in the limelight with a

small-press run of his third volume of poetry, *The Eighth Day*.[28] Sections of the work include "Come Dark" and "Praise Mother Dark." In many of these poems insight is found in darkness, whereas light tends to be blinding. Also, there are linkages to the Cold War. There is a eulogy of "Comrade Shostakovich" and one poem has a reference to a jet flying over Korea, but perhaps more telling is the archaeological dig of New York City in "Wire Triangulations" (involving the excavation of TV aerials) many years after what had been a nuclear strike. In the last poem of the volume there is apparent referencing to the nuclear freeze movement: "We're meeting in the small white church to try to stop the bomb. / At dawn just after a storm, near the shore, I saw a scarlet tanager / ignite black pine—this highpriest without camouflage who still / survives in light." Mortenson may inspire others to reexamine similar works for shadows of the Cold War.

Still, Mortenson's overall analysis seems random with respect to selectivity of materials to analyze. Did the evidence follow the presupposition or did the thesis follow the evidence? The author could definitely be accused of ignoring some of the material from which the material was taken. Exactly how much of the Beat material has shadows? There is the quintessential passage from *On the Road* that seems quite opposite of Mortenson's focus: "… the only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles…."[29] The manic passage seems full of life, even joy. Of course, a Philadelphia lawyer might argue that the fireworks Kerouac invokes represent the nighttime and invariably shadows. Regardless, Kerouac, influenced by religious sensitivity (not atomic weaponry), liked to express himself using a "light-in-darkness motif."[30] Even if there are shadows here and there, how does one determine consequentiality?

And what about other "shadows" of the counterculture era, such as the poster of the Broadway musical *Hair* of cast member Steve Curry and its "backlit nimbus of hair"? The designer Ruspoli-Rodriguez "paired the head with its mirror image underneath, then saturated the picture with solarized tones of acid green, yellow and red" and made the two bushy heads a whole by tracing them with a white edging.[31] Not only is this iconic image a shadow, it also vaguely resembles a mushroom cloud. Arguably, LSD and acid rock were about shadows. As it was reasoned: what is real is not real; one must hallucinate, go on a drug trip, to find what is hidden. According to Rorabaugh, "If psychedelics opened the doors of perception, broke on through to the other side, and challenged everything, then the boundary-obliterating drugs blurred good and evil: ethics were now situational" (79). With the song "Sympathy for the Devil" by the Rolling Stones, evil was presented as having an equal right to a claim for truth. The counterculture's flirtation with other religions outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition went along with this desire to investigate the shadow, to forsake what in the past was regarded as "the light." The counterculture often had to operate in the shadows; for instance, the Beatles supposedly disguised references to drugs, such as LSD in the song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." The LSD pitchman Timothy

Leary regarded the Beatles song "A Day in the Life" as the culmination of his cultural aim, apparently because of its "I'd love to turn you on" ending,[32] but it is a song in which its crescendo suggests a nuclear explosion, hence a cloud over humanity. Rorabaugh writes that "many young people were terrified of nuclear war" (69), but some of these same people were probably also terrified of snakes, the FBI, the draft, a bad trip, and the dentist. No matter, it would be a contrivance to read the Cold War into the playful *Hair* poster, unless there was a thesis that needed proven.

Shadows existed prior to the Cold War, so it is ludicrous to imagine that all shadows coinciding with the Cold War era were a consequence of the Cold War. Perhaps some of the shadows existed because it was just natural phenomenon? One can recall Philip Jones Griffiths' *Vietnam Inc.*, an eerie collection of black-and-white photographs of the war.[33] Shadows are an inevitable aspect; it would be difficult to have images minus shadows. As Joni Mitchell sings, "Every picture has its shadows."[34] Closer to our contemporary time, there is the 1993 Cranberries music video of "Linger" where the late Irish singer Dolores O'Riordan is cast into a shadowy world of black and white (or grayscale), in the style of film noir, wandering around the halls of an old hotel and supposedly singing about her first kiss. Had this production dated back to 1959, it could have gone along with The Shadow and the over 182 million views on YouTube, proof of widespread cultural angst.[35] Other than imagination, what are the hermeneutic rules?

The title of Mortenson's concluding chapter contains the word "Penumbra," an astronomy term pertaining to the outer region of a shadow. Some readers will automatically recall the 7-2 *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) ruling of the US Supreme Court. In the majority opinion drafted by Justice William O. Douglas, there is the famous (or infamous) "penumbra" metaphor pertaining to the Constitution. For Douglas, who was quite a womanizer and in accord with the sexual revolution, the penumbra was useful for bringing clarity about the right of Americans to have access to birth control. This reinforces Mortenson's point throughout his book about how shadows offer possibilities. Douglas argued that the right of privacy was an inherent part of the First, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Ninth amendments, so therefore, "the Bill of Rights have penumbras, formed by emanations from those guarantees that help give them life and substance."[36] Such esotericism cleverly swept aside state restrictions on birth control. Surely, Douglas was not thinking about the Cold War as he drafted the opinion. Yet, perhaps thinking of a sequel, Mortenson in his conclusion notes that the shadow exists independent of the Cold War. Did not the George W. Bush administration, prior to the Iraq War, warn about a potential mushroom cloud at the hands of the malevolent Saddam Hussein (who later turned out not to have weapons of mass destruction)? The Shadow. When Bush was once addressing cadets, Mortenson adds, he warned how the war on terrorism entails "fighting shadowy, entrenched enemies" (244). The Shadow. Thus, Mortenson concludes that shadows create "an opening for the imagination to think beyond the actual" (248). Indeed. *Mweh! heh! heh! ha! ha!*

Notes

1. Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (Cambridge, MA: De Capo Press, 2001), 18.
2. Richard Brautigan, *Trout Fishing in America* (New York: Dell, 1967).
3. See John F. Barber, "Novels > Trout Fishing in America," Brautigan.Net, http://www.brautigan.net/trout.html (accessed August 10, 2018).
4. George Will, "Slamming The Doors," *Newsweek*, March 25, 1991, 65.
5. See Leonard Steinhorn, *The Greater Generation: In Defense of the Baby Boom Legacy* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2006).
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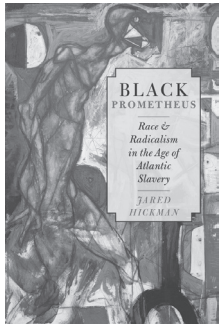
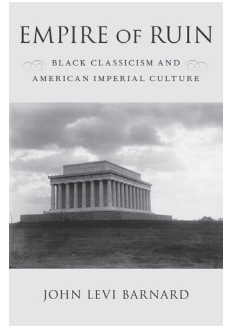
Review Essay

Iconography, Race, and Lore in the Atlantic World

Markeysha D. Davis





BLACK PROMETHEUS: Race and Radicalism in the Age of Atlantic Slavery. By Jared Hickman. New York: Oxford University Press. 2017.
EMPIRE OF RUIN: Black Classicism and American Imperial Culture. By John Levi Barnard. New York: Oxford University Press. 2018.
BLACK AND BLUR. By Fred Moten. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2017.

On the afternoon of July 4, 2018, the images of a black woman sitting calmly (then lying and crouching) at the feet of the Statue of Liberty flooded social media timelines and broadcast news programs. A short time earlier, the woman at the center of the spectacle, activist Therese Patricia Okoumou, had parted ways with a group of direct-action demonstrators from Rise and Resist to scale the

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base of the statue. Collectively, the group of eight had decided to take a stance on Independence Day against President Donald Trump's recent "zero tolerance" immigration policies and the separation and detention of Mexican and Central American children. Of her own volition, Okoumou—who had immigrated from the Republic of Congo more than two decades ago—climbed before the demonstrators were confronted by police and tucked herself "in a copper crease of Lady Liberty's robes," (Killelea, "ABOLISH ICE: Woman Climbs Statue of Liberty to Protest Trump's Immigration Policies"). Her sole demonstration effectively shut down the national monument as authorities attempted to retrieve her.

Okoumou, who was arrested after a three-hour standoff with the NYPD, later told *The Guardian* that, in addition to thinking of and protesting for the children held in detention, she was imagining the symbolism of the very space she occupied: "I was thinking of Lady Liberty above me, you are so huge, you have always been a symbol of welcome to people arriving in America and right now, for me under this sandal, she is a shelter," (Joanna Walters, "Are They Going to Shoot Me?: Statue of Liberty Climber on Her Anti-Trump Protest"). What Therese Okoumou declares is, after all, what has come to represent the broader semiotic meaning of the Statue of Liberty. The robed, torch-bearing woman is the declared "Mother of Exiles." Historian Tyler Stovall writes that while Lady Liberty, a gift from France to the United States, is considered "the most famous immigrant in American history," there have been limits to the meaning and extent of her iconographic symbolism, especially as it regards American citizens and immigrants of color (Stovall 17). Stovall writes:

> The resplendent white lady standing above New York Harbor turned her back on the racialized working masses of Europe and the increasingly marginalized blacks and other people of color in America. When Americans celebrated the inauguration of the Statue of Liberty in 1886, they celebrated a racialized version of liberty […] Right from the beginning of its history, therefore, the Statue of Liberty was a powerful representation of white freedom. (13)

Representing what Stovall names "the whiteness of freedom" inherent in American liberty, the neoclassical design of the Statue of Liberty—modeled after the Roman goddess, Libertas—has long had limitations assigned implicitly (at the very least) to its meaning. However, what is interesting about Okoumou's choice to find "shelter" at the feet of this statue is that she too understands the limitations of the statue's iconography. This would explain why she and the other protestors decided to demonstrate on the monument on Independence Day in the first place. Yet, like many activists before her, she seems to have sought her meditation at the feet of the statue as a way to both reclaim that iconography for herself, as a black woman and a foreign-born naturalized citizen, while holding the nation accountable for its failure to reflect this iconography via libertarian values.

The visibility and the ongoing conversations steeped in the racialization of American iconography in the form of monuments, policies, art, and public spaces make the most recent texts by Jared Hickman, Fred Moten, and John Levi Barnard all the more compelling and timely. Each of the authors grapple with some iteration of the impact of black expression via literature, visual art, or performance on disruption of Eurocentric views of classicism and neo-classisicism. Hickman's *Black Prometheus: Race and Radicalism in the Age of Atlantic Slavery* (2017) and Barnard's *Empire of Ruin: Black Classicism and American Imperial Culture* (2018) take on this topic more directly, emphasizing specifically white American imperial co-optations of Ancient Greek and Roman (respectively) iconography and lore, while elaborating on the ways in which African-American authors, artists, and activists have taken those same symbols to point out the contradictions of American conceptions of freedom and liberty. Moten's *Black and Blur* (2017), however, takes a look inward—into "Afro-Atlantic" expressions of blackness—to blur conceptions of what is expressed by the artists, creators, and scholars at the center of his short essays as ways of being, knowing, and relating blackness to a modernity thrust upon them by the social, political, economic, and cultural ramifications of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Western Imperialism. At the heart of the subjects of each of these texts seems the same purpose that led Okoumou to the unchained feet of Lady Liberty: The idea that classical semiotics and hero-making is neither the sole possession of white America nor are these symbols a true reflection of liberty and civilization with the continued disenfranchisement of black Americans and other people of color in the United States.

Black Prometheus is a dense and thoroughly-researched entry into the use of classicist semiotics in the literature of the 18th and 19th centuries. Prometheus, the titan and architect of man who is punished by Zeus for gifting men fire, serves literature as a multifaceted character, at times sympathetic and heroic but, at others, cunning and undermining of the projects of the gods (particularly Zeus). At the crux of his evaluations of the symbolism of Prometheus in this literature, Hickman narrows his foci to two iterations of the titan that emerge—White Prometheus and Black Prometheus—whose existences ultimately negate one another:

> In so far as the triumph of the white Prometheus was based on the Euro-Christian's representation of the Absolute God to the non-Euro-Christian, the triumph of the white Prometheus took the form of a quest for the best of all possible defenses, the most comprehensive and nuanced justifications, of Euro-Christian imperialism.
>
> The triumph of black Prometheus, on the other hand, entailed a prophetic critique rather than a post facto rationalization of Euro-Christian hegemony. It represented a subjection to inquest and protest of the authority of the Euro-Christian God that modeled and licensed slaveholding. At the least, the

> triumph of the black Prometheus necessitated the opening of theodicy—making the Christian God's standing contingent on the demonstration of His will to revolutionize the cosmic status quo, to be genuinely universal, an undertaking that might be seen as the core of Afro-Atlantic Christianities and the orthodox anti slavery they spawned. […] The freedom of the first Prometheus, the white Prometheus, is an absolute freedom predicated on the subjugation of the second Prometheus, the black Prometheus; and the freedom of the second, black Prometheus variously contradicts the absolute freedom of the first, white Prometheus (Hickman 83).

Thereby, the interpretations of Prometheus or Promethean struggle ascribed to Ralph Waldo Emerson and Percy Bysshe and Mary Shelley by the author present different symbols and purposes (promoting, as Emerson does, the white titan iconography as representative of the benevolence and Absolute power of Euro-Christian God and, by association, Euro-Christians) are different from those of African-American orators and writers like Frederick Douglass, Benjamin Banneker as well as interpretations (by black and white writers) of the life and sacrifice of the ill-fated insurrectionist Denmark Vessey (258). That both the tragic and heroic idea of Prometheus bound or Prometheus liberating would be of use to writers attempting to validate their causes for black or white American freedom (which, per Hickman, cannot exist concurrently, based on the ideals presented) makes a compelling read.

Black Prometheus is sectioned into four parts to guide the reader through Hickman's argument. In Part I, "Historical Conditions and Contexts of Black Prometheanism," he outlines the culmination of the broad perspectives of Prometheus via the advents of globalism and modernity within the commencement of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Euro-Christian colonial project. In the second section, "Prometheus of Africa," Hickman presents the counter-position of African-centered Promethean symbolism against the idea of the Absolute authority of Euro-Christian hegemony and carries this discussion further into what he calls a "metahistory of African Survivals," or ascribing traditional Promethean (or titan) symbolism to African origins of astronomy and cosmography via "fugitive science" (centering authors like Banneker and Martin Delany). Part III, "Prometheus of Caucasus," returns to Hickman's discussion of Euro-Christian (or Euro-Christian-centered) ethno euhemerization of Prometheus in Euro-Atlantic (or Western) idealism; for this white Prometheus—as exemplified by the texts of the Shelleys—the titan was emblematic of "liberation through the tacitly presumed or aggressively asserted historical triumph of white civilization over nonwhite peoples," (226). Finally, in Part IV, "A Literary History of Slave Rebellion," Hickman presents a literary history of slave rebellion in fiction, extrapolating upon the limitations of cosmography and mythology, or how insurrection and rebellion complicate these understandings, within novels by J. Hector St. John de

Crevecoeur, Frederick Douglass, Victor Hugo, Gertrudis Bomez de Avellaneda y Arteaga, and Herman Melville and concludes the study with a discussion of Lord Byron's influence on Promethean transatlantic abolitionist literature by William Wells Brown, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Brazilian poet Castro Alves.

While an impressive and thought-provoking work of scholarship, *Black Prometheus* could have easily been two (or three) connected volumes of the influence of classicism and neo-classicism, by way of Prometheus, in the literature of the early New World. Hickman generously points the reader to discussions that might be of interest to them in his Introduction's section "How to Use This Book," pointing his readers to chapters 3 and 5 for the crux of his argument (25). However, for a work this impassioned, detailed, and complete, it is more than worth taking the entirety of his study all together. *Black Prometheus* is an infinitely resourceful literary study for those seeking to understand racialized iconography of Prometheus or the uses of cosmography (and metacosmography) in the discussions of liberation and freedom and how the possessor(s) of those symbols determines to whom its iconography might belong and, furthermore, how iconography is complicated by the very realities in which the creators and consumers live.

Similarly, John Levi Barnard's *Empire of Ruin* traces this iconography by way of "black classicism" from the founding of America through the present, considering its capacity to counteract the white capitalist American cooptation of the symbols of libertarianism, civilization, and moral authority as their own. In many cases throughout the study, Barnard presents the trope of the ancient Roman statesman Cato of Utica, who, like the mythological Prometheus, is regarded as both a sympathetic and heroic inspiration, having sacrificed his life rather than live under the rule of a tyrannical Julius Caesar, thereby martyring himself as a revolutionary emblem of Roman freedom, for both his counterparts and politicians, writers, artists, and audiences of the modern era (Barnard 27). The symbolism of Cato was especially true for the founders and early British colonists of America. White early Americans—anticipating the Revolutionary War and rejecting British rule—envisioned themselves Cato, their situation "Catonic." Furthermore, upon their freedom, the monuments and edifices of America reflected this fascination and reenvisioning of themselves (white Americans, especially the affluent and influential) as descendants—morally and historically—of a liberation-minded ancient Rome, by way of Cato's example. From the Revolutionary Era through the 21st century, Barnard traces this iconography but centers his discussion on the works of whom he and other scholars consider practioners of black classicism and their disruptions of the mythology of America as an heir of the libertarianism imagined of Ancient Rome. Expertly researched and efficiently written, *Empire of Ruin* brings the dynamic lyrics of Phillis Wheatley, the eviscerating critique of African-American abolitionist newspapers, the critical essays and fiction of William Wells Brown, Charles Chesnutt, and Toni Morrison, and the contrapuntal sculpture of Kara Walker to the fore as examples of African-American creators tackling the hypocrisies of white imperial authority and libertarianism. These

black classicists, Barnard demonstrates, effectively hold a mirror to American ideals of liberty and justice and reveal a reflection askew.

Empire of Ruin is separated into five chapters, each presenting a new facet of this flawed reflection of American principles. In his introduction, Barnard writes that, despite the fact that the mission and the monuments of the United States have engaged the "triumphal style of Rome," black classicist writers and artists engage a "countertradition" that provides "an incisive and persistent critique of both the 'barbarism inherent to the mission and the ways this barbarism is obscured and elided in the aesthetic forms of public memory" (16). The first chapter, "Phillis Wheatley and the Affairs of State," centers the enslaved poet's challenge to the moral authority of white American politics as a direct interlocutor of early statesmen through her verse. Critics of Wheatley's verse directed at or eulogizing white statesmen as acquiescing both her condition and the hegemony of (to echo Hickman) Euro-Christianity often miss the audacity of Wheatley's willingness to comment on affairs of the state, the actions of statesmen, and the hypocrisy of celebrating and promoting America as a land of independence and free will while sustaining and depending on the rewards of the enslavement of Africans. Like many other (later) black women writers in antebellum America, she appealed to the moral sympathies of white women; however, for her understanding of her readership, she also directed her messaging to white men of influence by addressing them as what Barnard calls "domestic men"—fathers, husbands, keepers and protectors of families (38). The second chapter, "In Plain Sight: Slavery and the Architecture of Democracy," Hickman centers the affront to Roman-inspired institution and monument construction of early American architects offered by abolitionist organs like *Liberator, Liberty Bell,* and the African American-published *Weekly Advocate.* Furthermore, the author, via *Liberty Bell*, introduces author and essayist William Wells Brown's critiques of America's ironic edifices, culminating in Brown's use of such inspired construction as the backdrop of the liberatory death of the tragic protagonist in his novel *Clotel; or The President's Daughter* (1853). The enslaved Clotel, the fictionalized daughter of Thomas Jefferson, finds herself trapped between groups of slave catchers on the Long Bridge during a botched on the Long Bridge, between the Capitol and the President's home in Virginia—symbolic of liberty and independence in America—and, in her desperation for freedom, she leaps to her death (100). Barnard captures the similar tone of essayist and author Charles Chesnutt in his scathing critiques of postbellum monuments throughout the nation's capital and black Americans' continued struggles with space and place in his third and fourth chapters, "Ancient History, American Time: Charles Chesnutt and the Sites of Memory" and "Crumbling into Dust: Conjure and the Ruins of Empire." First, Bernard catalogues the writer's observations in print, in which Chesnutt finds the new United States, after bloody war and attempted reconciliation, presenting an erasure of the nation's legacies of slavery and exploitation in their attempts to reconfigure and reconnect the American message of liberty by erecting new monuments in the old style. The discussion continues in the fourth chapter as

Chesnutt fictionalizes the continued desecration of (assigned) black spaces by systemic racism and dehumanization, demonstrated through his serialized stories, his collection of short stories *The Conjure Woman* (1899), and his novel *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901). *Empire of Ruin* concludes with "National Monuments and the Residue of History," featuring critiques of national monuments and juxtapositions of (white) American libertarian iconography with public demonstration of resistance (indirect or direct) by black activists and creators. The Lincoln Memorial figures prominently, as the backdrop of both singer Marian Anderson's defiant performance in 1939 and the location of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech during the March on Washington for Jobs and Justice in 1963. The chapter ends with Barnard's discussion of visual artist Kara Walker's controversial sculpture *A Subtlety* ("The Marvelous Sugar Baby"), which debuted in 2014 and featured a iconography of ancient Egypt—with a Mammy replica composed of refined white sugar and styrofoam—affecting the posture of a neoclassical image and iconography.

In Barnard's fast-moving study, there is so much unpacked but still so much left to discover. For the purpose of his text, Barnard excels at connecting and historicizing the literature and art on which he focuses. It seems that nothing is missing, but there is the exciting potential for more elaboration and development on many of his topics. For instance, a longer study of African-American contemporary art and literature (de)centering classic iconography would be a compelling follow up. The most revealing and novel segments of this text (not to shortchange his great work on the 20th and 21st century representations of black classicism or the confrontation of classical iconography by black Americans) are his discussions of Wheatley, Brown, and Chesnutt. There is much to learn about these oft-researched writers that he reveals in *Empire of Ruin.*

Poet and scholar Fred Moten's collection of essays *Black and Blur* offers a different confrontation with symbolism. While, like Hickman and Barnard, he centers "Afro-Atlantic" confrontation with the modern, transatlantic slavery, globalism, and systemic suppression and racism as one cause of the disjointed creation of new symbols and New World creations, he also holds intracultural understandings of culture and expression against one another to challenge what the reader (and the author himself) understands to be, or not be, "blackness." Blackness, Moten posits at the head of the collection, reflecting on the work of Saidiya Hartman:

> There is an open set of sentences of the kind blackness is *x* and we should chant them all, not only for and in the residual critique of mastery such chanting bears but also in devoted instantiation, sustenance and defense of the irregular. What is endowment that it can be rewound? What is it to rewind the given? What is it to wound it? What is it to be given to wounding and rewinding? Mobilized in predication, blackness mobilizes predication not only against but also before itself (viii).

When the notion of "blackness" is troubled, beyond the supposed authority and meaning of those who claim to have such, the idea is blurred. He emphasizes this idea in his essay "Interpolation and Interpelation." In his evaluation of the popular rap song "Ghetto Superstar" (1998) by Fugees-alum Pras, Moten discusses the song as indicative of symbols that validate the bourgeois mission of black success. Pras, known in the mid-1990s as part of a trio rapping and singing about black inner-city and diasporan struggle, was thought to have crossed over into mainstream banal rap with this well-received song. It also interpolates upon white American genres (country music) in its sample and was featured on the soundtrack of a mainstream motion picture (the Warren Beatty-led *Bullworth*). Hip hop, and thusly black radical expression, was coopted to some extent, Moten seems to suggest. However, Pras and hip hop journalist kris ex compose a novel of the same name (*Ghetto Superstar*), that centers the struggles of the protagonist not only to make it but survive the environmental factors that limit his access and vitality (i.e. systemic racism, police brutality). According to Moten, what Pras is able to do to for a sold-out (literally but perhaps not figuratively) song is turn the circumstance of his success on its head by inserting the hip-hop inspired story of black survival into literature, a genre perceived as bourgeois. The idea of Blackness and Afro-Atlantic expression are reclaimed then as radical:

> This becoming-object of the object, this resistance of the object that is (black) performance, that is the ongoing reproduction of the black radical tradition, that is the black proletarianization of bourgeois form, the sound of the sentimental avant-garde's interpolative noncorrespondence to time and tune, is the activation of an exteriority that is out from the outside, cutting the inside/outside circuitry of mourning and melancholia (33).

The mourning and melancholia central to narratives in both rap music and the novel *Ghetto Superstar* are indicative of a necessary reclaiming of narrative within and against the perceived-as-finite boundaries of form, feeling, expression, and meaning.

What is missing in Moten's brilliant volume will perhaps be fulfilled in the remaining volumes of the trio titled *consent not to be a single being*. *Black and Blur* is but the first offering of this series. Beyond his goal of understanding the uncertainty—the "blur"—of what blackness means and to whom and how blackness is expressed (or suppressed), the essays are indeterminable by chronology, connection of discourse, and length. However, one standout piece seems to give this reader a greater window into context of his discussion. "Nowhere, Everywhere" is a review of several exhibitions and projects of multimodal artist Theaster Gates. His projects challenge the fixity of blackness, undo the possibility of authenticity on broad display, particularly, as Moten notes, in his project *On Black Foundations*. "Theaster Gates will mess you up, if you let him," Moten warns.

> Theaster Gates will make you up if you let him. He facilitates your submission to your own critical imagining, with others. *On Black Foundations* is an antifoundational assertion of an antefoundational reality: that we mess and make each other up as we go along. This simultaneously deconstructive and reconstructive social poetics is restaged again and again in Gates's objects and engagements (166).

Gates builds institutions of antifoundational (and "antefoundational") black expression within institutions—museums, buildings, academic spaces—that demand a critical, if not uncomfortable gaze. This reflects the work of Kara Walker that concludes Barnard's study as well as the disruptive positioning of a Black Prometheus that defines the work of many black abolitionist writers in Hickman's text. To be disruptive, then, is not only to disrupt symbols of American and Western hypocrisy but also to trouble the line—disrupt, interpolate upon—that limit self-expression towards the end of liberation, including rigid notions of blackness or what one can effectively be or become as black.

Statue of Liberty protestor Therese Okoumou accomplishes both a disruption of American liberation semiotics and what one perceives as blackness in her act. The national media has broadly portrayed the faces of immigration struggle as Muslim and Hispanic. The presence of a black immigrant who not only sits in mediation at the feet of Lady Liberty on behalf of those centered in this debate but also wears a shirt declaring too that "White Supremacy is Terrorism"—a nod to Black Lives Matter and other ideas and advocacy organizations for people of color in the United States—disrupts the idea of who can represent the struggle for liberty in America and who does have the authority to claim those symbols for her/himself. The imagined "whiteness of freedom" in the United States need not limit the capacity of black Americans and other marginalized groups to climb as high as they came and reclaim, remake, and rewrite the iconography as old as our independence. As Hickman, Barnard, and Moten demonstrate in their texts, what is available to be claimed for the purposes of liberty, self-expression, and autonomy have historically been limited not only by the white hold on revolutionary and historical iconography—like Prometheus, Cato, and Libertas—but how we define ourselves against the rigidity of systemic racism and imagined authenticity, per Moten, needs to be blurred and disrupted as well in the name of this claim to liberation.

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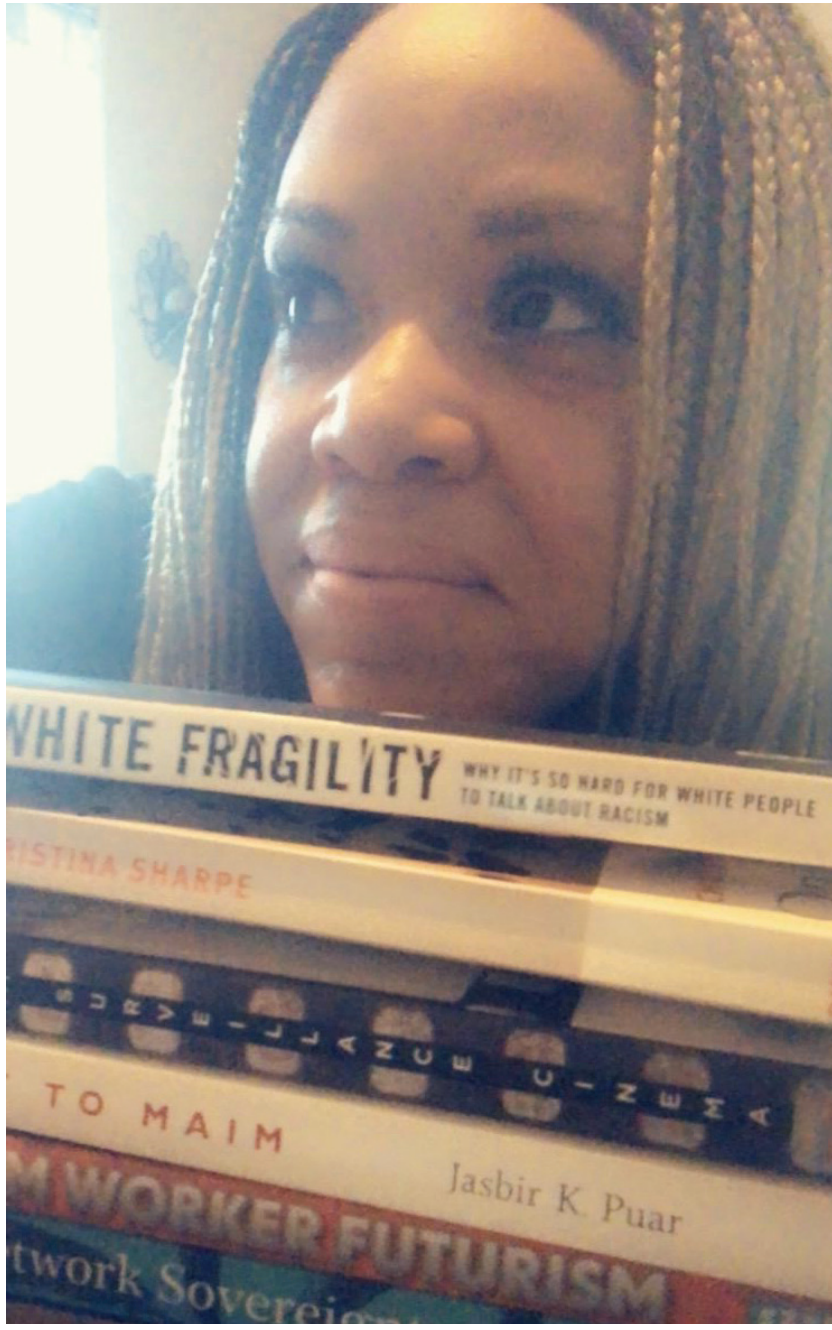
Managing Editor Elizabeth Wilhelm dives into her dissertation research. Photo credit: Bobby Cervantes

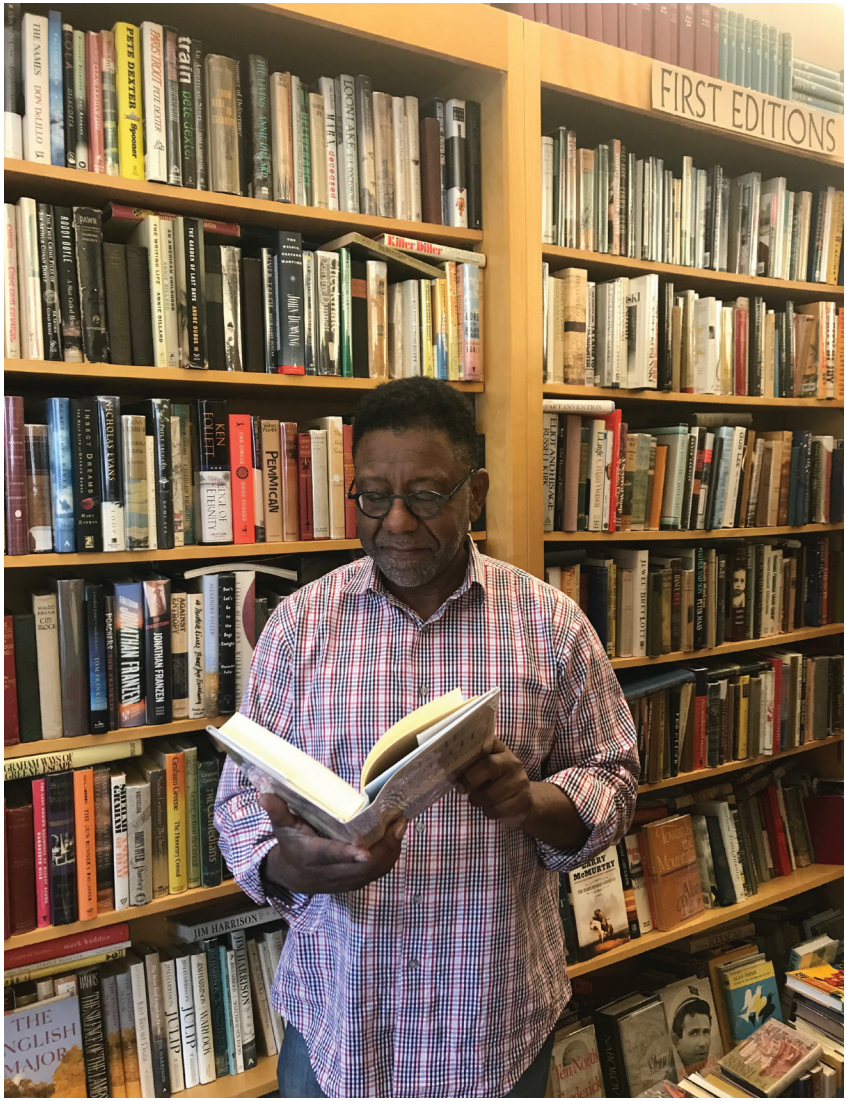
Co-editor Sherrie Tucker reading and learning from the Students at the Center. Credit: Sherrie Tucker.

Assistant Editor Bobby Cervantes and Kathryn Vaggalis, both KU American Studies graduate students, with Professor Angela Davis at the 2018 American Studies Association conference. Credit: Bobby Cervantes.

Editorial Board Member Mark Hulsether's view on his trek from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, for a Fulbright semester a year ago. On this day on the northern plains, it was nearly 100 degrees colder than it was in Mexico, where he had been the previous week. Credit: Mark Hulsether.



Editorial Board Member Deborah Whaley is ready to read. Credit: Deborah Whaley.



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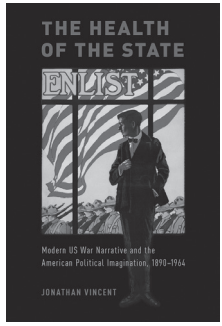
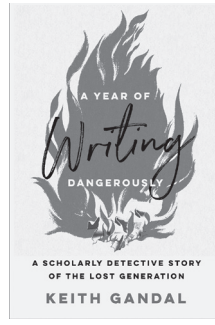
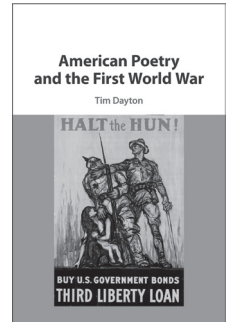
Review Essay

The Health of the Field: American World War I Literary Studies at the Centenary

David A. Rennie







THE HEALTH OF THE STATE: Modern US War Narrative and the American Political Imagination, 1890-1964. By Jonathan Vincent. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
WAR ISN'T THE ONLY HELL: A New Reading of American World War I Literature. By Keith Gandal. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018.
AMERICAN POETRY AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR. By Tim Dayton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Coming towards the end of the World War I centenary, these works arrive at a point when American World War I literary studies may be said to have come

0026-3079/2018/5802-047$2.50/0 American Studies, 58:2 (2019): 47–53

of age. Given the major role the war played in the lives and fiction of America's most significant 20th-century authors, a surprisingly sparse and intermittent series of monographs followed Stanley Cooperman's classic synthesis of the lost generation paradigm in *World War I and the American Novel* (1967). Since the millennium, however, interest gradually has grown in the form of monographs by Patrick Quinn (2001), Jennifer Haytock (2003), Keith Gandal (2008), Mark Whalan (2008), Karsten Piep (2009), Pearl James (2013), Hazel Hutchison (2015), and Kimberly Licursi (2018), as well as in the extensive work done by the area's leading proponent, Steven Trout (most notably in *On The Battlefield of Memory* (2010)).

Accompanying this expansion in scholarly interest has been an equally important rehabilitation of non-canonical World War I writers. Authors such as Thomas Boyd, Ellen La Motte, Mary Borden, Laurence Stallings, Hervey Allen, and Victor Daly are now moving from the status of peripheral curiosities toward the center of this ever-growing conversation. With the Dayton, Gandal, and Vincent studies reviewed here—and *A History of American Literature and Culture of the First World War* (Cambridge University Press) and more book-length studies in the wings—American World War I literary studies has transitioned from a niche interest to a major field. It is heartening to see this rich area now receiving attention commensurate with its vast and still-to-be-determined merits. However, the consolidation of this area—and the increasing scholarly competition taking place within—poses the question of how this field should develop. Though indelibly inscribed on the period, the lost generation notion is thoroughly exploded. Rehabilitation, though incomplete, has surely recovered the most significant forgotten voices. What direction, then, remains open to scholars?

In response to the narrow logic of the lost generation—that Americans were left disillusioned and disgusted by the war—the natural course was to diversify and recover the experiences of smaller constituencies of memory, to look at home front, pro-war, female, African American, and political perspectives, for instance. Alternatively, different hermeneutic constituencies have been proposed, where scholars have argued that the entire corpus of American World War I writing can (or should) be seen in the light of one dominant emotion or type of reaction. The occasional problem with this development is that—sometimes implicitly in the first category, and often explicitly in the latter—textual and historical nuances are either left out or suppressed in order to uphold the parameters of a particular line of reasoning. Selectivity and focus in academic inquiry are inevitable and desirable, but there is always the risk of formulaic rigidity and reductive analysis. Each of the works discussed here negotiates these issues.

The Health of the State: Modern US War Narrative and the American Political Imagination, 1890-1964 provides a long-term discussion of the ways American war-making has advanced liberal capitalist democracy. Discussing a wide range of fiction, from the Civil War to World War II, Vincent argues that in these works "the political solution of war, the liberal ideal's supposed adversary, becomes here its necessary, ascriptive supplement, the constitutive

gel of its hegemony." *War Isn't the Only Hell* explores the tensions caused by the meritocratic organization of the US army, which challenged the masculinity of Anglo American combatants and non-combatants. Gandal assesses canonical figures such as Faulkner and Hemingway, but also broadens his scope to include lesser-studied authors like Boyd, Stallings, Daly, and La Motte. Gandal also expands his interest in meritocracy to the African American war experience, which involved discrimination as well as new (slim) chances for advancement, and to American women, for whom the war likewise presented social challenges and opportunities. *American Poetry and the First World War*, meanwhile, provides a historical materialist analysis of the relationship between poetry and America's economic and political rise "as the hegemonic power of the capitalist world-system" during the war. Dayton discusses several forgotten poets as well as, in discrete chapters: Alan Seeger's medievalism, Edith Wharton's culturally deterministic view of war, epic verse, and the poetry of E.E. Cummings—assessing these texts as they accede to or resist America's emerging identity as the world's dominant superpower.

Vincent argues that the need to "coordinate public energies in line with US Global expansion" caused Civil War novels from this time—such as Joseph Kirkland's *The Captain of Company K* (1891) and Ellen Glasgow's *The Battle-Ground* (1902)—to promote ideals "of cooperation and incorporation … attributable only to the power of that era's political imagination." Moving to the years of World War I, Vincent describes novels from this period—by the likes of Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews and Gertrude Atherton—"[a]dapting further the emphasis on transpersonality in turn-of-the-century Civil War fiction," by promoting "a mystical culture of sacrifice, fantasies of spiritual rebirth through self-surrender drawn from older Christian ontologies."

The homogeneous, unified inclusivity Vincent identifies in the Progressive Era, while valid for a time, could not be sustained into the "diverse, more sophisticated culture that outlived it." For Vincent, some post-war texts still worked in an inclusivist vein. John Thomason's *Fix Bayonets* (1925), for instance, he views as sustaining "reverence for … preparedness sensibilities," while he credits Jessie Redmon Fauset's *There is Confusion* (1924) with seeking to advance the standing of the black community through "accommodationist metaphors." Vincent, however, also attempts to incorporate dissenting voices into his vision of evolving liberal capitalism. These critical, disillusioned texts "helped sort out and stabilize the panoply of competing social visions confronting architects of a modernizing state, a continuation, rather than a renunciation of the more general, overarching desire for social cohesion and predictability."

Vincent's postulation of "competing social visions" relies almost exclusively on snippets quoted from David Harvey's *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1989), and here his argument becomes less convincing. Throughout, Vincent, whose background is in critical social theory and political philosophy, employs a dense prose style abounding in abstract terminology that—though always admissible—would perhaps be better exchanged for a clearer, more-developed

analysis. Stylistics aside, since both dissenting and complicit voices apparently count towards the same end, one wonders if any text *would not* buttress the evolution of liberal capitalism under Vincent's schema?

Moreover, because Vincent is painting with very broad brushstrokes, he does overlook the nuances in some of the works he draws on. For instance, he argues that Claude McKay's *Home to Harlem* (1928) repudiates "national absorption," though at the same time promotes a kind of "racial essentialism" through the display of an individualism which reinforces the status quo. Though, in fact, McKay's book consistently argues for the unique character of individual African Americans. "We may all be niggers aw'right," observes the main character, Jake Brown, "but we ain't nonetall all the same."

For Vincent, E.E. Cummings's *The Enormous Room* (1922) and Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) display a "suspicion of society." Their focus on "processes of self-reinvention, rather than modes to address state power," amount to a "political refusal" which "inaugurated and substantiated the identity structure most amenable to 'corporatist pluralism.'" However, as Alex Vernon has noted, Hemingway's novel is invested in "the class unrest that manifested in much of Europe's attraction to socialism and communism," at a time where, in Italy, "capitalism held no proprietary claim to modernization and democracy." Cummings, meanwhile, was incarcerated in a French military prison after he and a friend, William Slater Brown, expressed (allegedly) pro-German statements in their correspondence. Richard S. Kennedy describes *The Enormous Room*'s irreverent attitude to authority, bureaucracy, and the military as "a symbolic attack upon all governmental structures." Given a clearer prose style and more deliberate textual analysis, the readings Vincent proposes would feel more convincing. As it is, one gets—at times—the feeling his argument is being imposed on the texts, rather than traced from careful readings.

Gandal's work continues the view outlined in his 2008 study, *The Gun and the Pen*, where he argued with reference to Hemingway, Faulkner, and Fitzgerald: "their renowned high modernist style, in particular its symbolism and tragedy, issued, not primarily … out of the trauma of the war or a break with tradition that the catastrophe of the war had proven failed, but rather out of a need to both express and submerge" the stigma of their emasculatory war service. Gandal develops this theme in *War Isn't the Only Hell*, claiming that lost generation literature is "largely a dismayed and disillusioned response, not to the war but to the mobilization of the new American army," though in the latter study the net is widened to examine the reverberations of this forgotten social moment amongst female, combatant, and African American perspectives.

Gandal takes justifiable pride in his focus on mobilization's social consequences. He makes the valuable point that the structure of AEF service posed many threats to American masculinity: exchanging personal freedom and privilege for military authority and bureaucracy; witnessing non-white (and to a lesser degree, African American) upward social mobility as a result of mobilization; not to mention the fact that majority of soldiers served in a non-combatant

capacity—a potentially belittling status given the ubiquity of heroic images of war service in contemporary propaganda.

When it works, Gandal's research throws up revelatory interpretations. He makes, for instance, a highly compelling case that John Andrews of John Dos Passos's *Three Soldiers* (1921) becomes dehumanized by his army physical examination and that this, rather than the grind of military routine, leaves him "traumatized." Gandal also makes a fine argument that Thomas Boyd's *Through the Wheat* (1923), rather than being an "anti-war" text, actually reflects protagonist William Hicks's pride at succeeding in the meritocratic army. Likewise, Gandal contends that Victor Daly's *Not Only War* (1932) not only displays the superficiality of racial prejudice but also focuses on the emasculation endured by Anglo American Robert Lee Casper when he finds his conception of racial supremacy threatened by French social attitudes. Equally, however, Gandal's analysis can sometimes feel forced, as he determinedly pursues his line of reasoning.

He claims, for instance, that Hemingway "transmuted" his supposedly emasculatory war service into the physical emasculation of Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). "Something similar happened to Hemingway … because of his position as an ambulance driver, a mere boy." However, Hemingway's war service on the Italian front, though short, actually exposed him to more combat than the average American soldier. Furthermore, Gandal echoes Agnes von Kurowsky's "Dear John" letter breaking off her relationship with Hemingway, inferring this is symptomatic of his military emasculation. In reality, he was passed over by a woman who was uneasy about their age difference—she was seven years older than the teenage Hemingway—and who had fallen for an Italian officer. These circumstances have nothing to do with US mobilization. There is also the—entirely unsubstantiated—claim that Jay Gatsby's death in *The Great Gatsby* (1925) is "a backlash against the military's sudden extension of equal opportunity to ethnic Americans." Similarly, there is the—baffling—contention that Ellen La Motte, a professional nurse and the author of *The Backwash of War* (1916), was "so dedicated to usefulness and efficiency that she was at times incapable of politic compromise and or even perhaps humaneness." One wonders, firstly, if her attitude might not instead reflect the degree of detachment necessary for medical professionals? Secondly, the outrage La Motte demonstrates at the hypocrisy, insensitivities, and meretricious rhetoric of the war effort surely demonstrates a very high degree of empathy.

As with *The Health of the State*, Dayton's study considers literary engagement with the "advancement of the project of establishing the United States as the hegemonic power in the capitalist world-system." In tracing this trajectory of American expansion, he makes the valuable point that much of the rhetoric surrounding American intervention—and its resulting fiction—was intimately tied to and shaped by "the millennialist tradition in American culture." "This American ideology manifests itself as a collection of cultural-symbolic and rhetorical patterns that define the United States in terms of a redemptive mission of global and ultimately transcendental import." These feelings built on the Puritan sense

of an "errand into the wilderness"—a crusade to establish a Christian community in the New World—which fed into Manifest Destiny and were re-appropriated for the Great War. As Dayton writes: "Wilsonian universalism imagined America as the new Israel, with the concept of errand licensing a project to save the world through active involvement in its affairs." But the American project has expanded, now, not just to purify the American hinterland but to "redeem a fallen world."

Dayton discusses obscure poets such as M. A. DeWolfe Howe and Percy MacKaye whose poetry describes American intervention "in terms of a redemptive mission of global and ultimately transcendent import." In Dayton's analysis, mobilization poetry—which might otherwise be dismissed as simply bad—attains a new degree of significance when it is seen to adapt distinctively American cultural paradigms to the nation's role in the first global war. Though Dayton's focus is on the war's role in the dawning of American global hegemony, he is not prescriptive in his analysis of the literary response, which he presents as being highly individual.

In his chapter on Alan Seeger, for instance, Dayton notes that Seeger's view of the war as a martial crusade aligned him with the wider presentation of the war as a medieval quest. For Seeger, however, "the value of martial ideals and martial experience was primarily personal and only secondarily social." For Dayton, Edith Wharton shares Seeger's view of the war as an ennobling quest—as witnessed in her sincere application of Horace's "*dulce et decorum est*" in *A Son at the Front* (1923)—and in seeing the conflict as a means of "freeing modern society from the vices of modernity." Unlike Seeger, her war writing is animated by a collectivist impulse, but one invested in the preservation of Old World civilization (symbolized by France). Thus, Wharton is at odds with the hegemonic rhetoric of American intervention, yet dependent upon it for the preservation of her beloved adopted culture. Meanwhile, Dayton contends that, rather than being apolitical and disillusioned in *The Enormous Room*, E.E. Cummings, in fact, satirically registers his repudiation of the political climate surrounding American intervention. Specifically, he alleges that the poem "next to of course god America i" is a rebuke to the nationalistic propaganda poetry generated by the war. Altogether, he "set out to destroy … the ideological armature of the American war effort."

Dayton could probably have reached his conclusions without his lengthy invocation of Goran Therborn's idea of the "inclusive-historical register," and likewise Dayton's repeated attempts to distance his work from that of Mark Van Wienen—the main commentator on US World War I poetry—sometimes feel unnecessary. More importantly, the reader is left to wonder, since Dayton does touch on the fiction of Wharton, how he views other novelists reacting to the dawning of American hegemony? To what degree does this feature in the work of Boyd, Fitzgerald, and Borden, for instance? However, his central focus—the evolution of American hegemony and its support by poetic adaptations of the iconography of American exceptionalism—is an important addition to the debate,

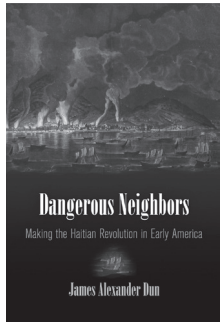
and one which further suggests the underappreciated significance of poetry in these discussions.

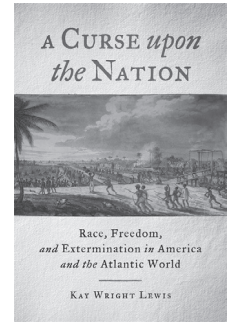
Each of these volumes enriches American World War I studies and indicates a strong state of health in the field. They also suggest the challenges ahead of future scholars. The corpus of American World War I fiction is sizable, but one nevertheless approachable in the round within the length of a monograph. The challenge appears to be advancing a fresh methodological approach while avoiding skewed readings of texts to support it. The surge of scholarly interest in American World War I literature has only been possible because of the underappreciated social and literary importance of these works, several of which have moved from peripheral to canonical status. It seems unlikely this collective interest could have been sustained if the texts involved merely reflect the war in a simplistic, one-dimensional way. And to claim or imply this is the case does not seem, to me, to be the most fruitful way of continuing the recovery of this area of literary history.

Review Essay

Freedom and Extermination: Violence, Culture, and Politics in the Era of Haitian and U.S. Emancipation

Justin Rogers-Cooper





DANGEROUS NEIGHBORS: Making the Haitian Revolution in Early America. By James Alexander Dun. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 2016.
THE HAITIAN REVOLUTION AND THE EARLY UNITED STATES: Histories, Textualities, Geographies. Edited by Elizabeth Maddock Dillion and Michael Drexler. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 2016.
A CURSE UPON THE NATION: Race, Freedom, and Extermination in America and the Atlantic World. By Kay Wright Lewis. Atlanta, GA: University of Georgia Press. 2017.

0026-3079/2018/5802-055$2.50/0 American Studies, 58:2 (2019): 55–66

In "Harlem," Langston Hughes famously asks whether "a dream deferred" festers or sags, but also questions, "*Or does it explode*?" Speculating on the poem's famous conclusion in the wake of the slave rebellions of 1791 in the French colony of Saint Domingue, and considering the serial events that led to the creation of Haiti in 1804 and later the U.S. Civil War, might offer us another kind of question: what happens to the dream *after* it explodes? In different ways, the books reviewed here provide comprehensive valences on the catastrophic violence that defined the emancipation of Saint Domingue, but also on the hopes and fears stirred by what became the Haitian Revolution for a network of U.S. and Haitian constituencies: presidents, politicians, abolitionists, doctors, artists, novelists, essayists, journalists, voters, and especially black intellectuals.

Two of the three texts under review, James Alexander Dun's *Dangerous Neighbors: Making the Haitian Revolution in Early America* and Elizabeth Maddock Dillon and Michael Drexler's edited collection, *The Haitian Revolution and the Early United States*, build upon a now formative and expanding base of scholarship on the Haitian Revolution to explore its political, cultural, and historical trajectories in early American public life. The third text, Kay Wright Lewis' *A Curse Upon the Nation: Race, Freedom, and Extermination in America and the Atlantic World*, provides a broader Atlantic context for considering the ways "racial extermination was not 'unthinkable'" for white and black Americans living in the long nineteenth century (2). Taken together, the three texts convincingly assert that the cultural and political fabric of the post-revolutionary United States smoked from the fires set on the plantations of Saint Domingue. Moreover, they suggest that the threads of antebellum U.S. culture and politics, perhaps contrary to the national imaginaries of the next century, remained twisted despite being pulled in opposite directions. In the tangled knot at the center lay for some the inspirational 1804 Constitution proclaiming the end of slavery, and yet others could only see a hemispheric apocalypse to be contained at all costs.

The archives and texts in the three books under review point to the apocalyptic potential of slave economies, and to the capacities of the enslaved to create new realities within the constraints of historical forces. This makes Lewis' reference to the "unthinkable," which comes from Michel-Rolph Trouillot's influential work *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History,* a notable touchstone for all three texts. In his famous account, Trouillot writes the Haitian Revolution "entered history with the peculiar characteristic of being unthinkable even as it happened," by which he partly meant that ruling classes could not understand the revolution as it unfolded, but instead placed it into "ready-made categories" (73). In *Dangerous Neighbors*, Dun emphasizes how Touillot's reflections express the ways historical "narrative production…tends to flatten a history out," yet Dun and the other authors here would very likely agree that such flattening did not happen all at once, but came later (in the U.S., for example, powerful legacies of black emancipation succumbed to the sentimental whitewashing of Civil War memories following the dismantling of Reconstruction, as scholars such as David Blight detail). As such, these texts challenge us to consider new

heuristics for understanding the hemispheric collapse of Atlantic slavery and the rise of transnational movements for emancipation. More importantly, they provide new archives and genealogies for imagining the emergence of racialized modernity, and revise perspectives on figures such as Thomas Jefferson, Frederick Douglass, and Toussaint L'Ouverture, and events like the Louisiana Purchase, Nat Turner's rebellion, and John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry.

In *Dangerous Neighbors*, Dun tracks how the constantly shifting fortunes of the Saint Domingue rebellion was narrated in newspapers and periodicals in Philadelphia, then the nation's commercial and political capital, and how editors, readers, and politicians reacted to (often distorted) news from the colony as competing interests and parties tried to manipulate and interpret events to their political and commercial advantage. As Dun notes, between 1791 and 1804 a "host of sensational developments unfolded," and "American interest was driven by the sense that these events were globally important and locally relevant" (3, 4). This interest climaxed in Philadelphia, which, aside from its political and economic importance, was also the newspaper capital of the United States. As events in Saint Domingue escalated, one of the key stakes for Americans were the revolutionary ideas in play and what they meant. "Stories from the French colony raised questions about slavery and rebellion," he relays, "but they also gave rise to more fundamental queries about revolution—whether or not its principles operated universally, about the boundaries it established between race and citizenship, and over its anticolonial implications" (17). As Dun successfully establishes across his chapters, the United States in the 1790s contained a multitude of attitudes and expectations about whether slavery would survive the age of revolutions.

The drama emanating out of Saint Domingue thus spelled a kind of forecast about the fate of the United States. One of Dun's lessons is that the lasting American narrative of Saint Domingue's emancipation—that of black atrocities against white colonists—only later became conflated with the independence of Haiti (although not necessarily for all Americans, as Dillon and Drexler's volume documents). It appears that the Haitian revolution was, in fact, at first quite 'thinkable,' and gradually became 'unthinkable' less because of events in Saint Domingue than due to domestic and national tensions in and between the United States, France, and England. True, for Dun the "conceptual limitations" of white Americans meant they did not always "comprehend the truly radical changes going on" (21). One of Dun's most striking arguments explains how it was the emergent Republican party that branded the violence in Saint Domingue as a catastrophe of black power, and exploited the idea of American whiteness as a political tool to consolidate electoral power domestically. This effectively simplified the narrative of what became the Haitian revolution, but also foreclosed the horizon of meaning for the American one.

Dun's first chapter examines the first reactions of U.S. readers to civil unrest in Cap-Français in 1791, and demonstrates his fine attention to the ways news arrived by ship (William Davis, captain of the brig *Hetty*) and became propelled

by particular editors (Benjamin Franklin Bache) and newspapers (*General Advertiser, and Political, Commercial, and Literary Journal*) before reappearing elsewhere in and beyond Philadelphia. In this case, white colonists were revolting against a French decree that free blacks and persons of color ("mulattoes") had equal rights in the colony (27). The revolt was only the latest indication that violence in Saint Domingue was spreading and politically meaningful; Dun references the recent death of Colonel Thomas-Antoine, a veteran of the Continental Army murdered by his troops at Port-au-Prince, to situate the ways Americans framed the nascent violence through figures and characters of their own recent revolution and through the ideas of those including Thomas Paine. He explains how the subsequent brutal execution of Vincent Ogé, a free man of color who amassed a small force to win him the colony's recognition as an equal, led Philadelphia readers to associate violence in Cap Français with the "egalitarian ethos" of the concurrent French Revolution (39). Was Ogé's death an example of anarchy, or a dimension of a new world order?

Dun argues that Americans first saw events in Saint Domingue as "French," yet also believed they pointed to a promise of universal equality. By late 1791, the slave uprising on the Plaine du Nord sent refugees into Philadelphia, along with stories of atrocities that were difficult to verify. Americans "recognized" the actions of the enslaved through existing prisms about slave insurrections and did not believe them to be "simply campaigns for extermination" (57). Dun's second chapter traces such reactions to two "interpretive frameworks"—royalists were promoting rebellion, or maroon bands were at work—that guided those recognitions (61). Such interpretations morphed as it became clear black insurgents were fighting for freedom, liberty, and control over their labor. Those like newspaper editor Abraham Bishop began claiming the insurrections were expressive of a "universal pattern of struggle" common to the American and French revolutions (74). Others countered that those responsible were "French negroes," or brigands imitating revolutionaries threatening to be "volatile exemplars to slaves everywhere" (82, 83).

By 1793, increasing numbers of colonial refugees found Philadelphia upset by outbreak of yellow fever. In his third chapter, Dun narrates how events related to France dominated American views of the dynamics in Saint Domingue: the declaration of the French Republic, the outbreak of European war, the offer of freedom to black insurgents fighting for the republic, the burning of Le Cap, and the emancipation of slaves. As the British invaded the colony and Washington briefly placed an embargo on U.S. shipping there in 1794, Americans had to grapple with the implications of a "universal movement that pitted republicanism against tyranny everywhere," and one irrespective to race (92). It was a notion promoted through a new French minister in Philadelphia, Edmond Charles Genet (92). As the administration of George Washington resisted Genet's efforts to win support for France, cabinet members like Alexander Hamilton found Genet's ideas and methods not just distasteful, but dangerous: he believed them un-American. Reports of violence from the colony now became increasingly racialized. Thomas

Jefferson, for his part, believed the increasingly successful slave revolts intimated a new world "segregated by race," not one of universal equality (117).

The French National Decree of February 4, 1794 abolishing slavery in the colonies, however, also set off a period of "antislavery promise" in Pennsylvania (125). The Abolition Society and politicians like John Shoemaker made plans to revise the 1780 abolition act and rethink the import of the state's constitution. Their hopes coincided with a resurgent activism in Philadelphia's black community, which centered on a newly developing African Church. Black leaders acknowledged the structure signified "black separation" and implied that "fundamental human rights intended for universal application" in the American Revolution had "gone awry" (127). It was a moment complicated by events in San Domingue and the yellow fever outbreak. Racist narratives about the fever by Matthew Carey, who oversaw relief efforts as part of a citizen committee, blamed black citizens for extorting dying and dead patients. In refuting Carey's baseless claims, black church leaders Richard Allen and Absalom Jones explained how stereotypes of black Americans as barbaric were an effect of slave culture, not blackness. Dun aptly contextualizes this debate in chapter four, and how the opening for antislavery thought and activism became compounded by perceptions of revolutionary instability in France and Saint Domingue. The 1793 Fugitive Slave Act in the U.S. and its defenders in Congress linked national security to the necessity of enslavement: "White lives, not black (or universal) rights, were the entity under threat. The protection of the one was linked to the destruction of the other" (140). The eclipse of possibilities for black freedom in the United States, in part inspired by the successes of self-emancipated workers in Saint Domingue, would from here become more and more unthinkable.

Dun's fifth chapter details the entanglement of Saint Domingue in French-U.S. relations and domestic politics through American politics and from the perspective of Toussaint L'Ouverture. By the late 1790s, rumors of mixed race refugees arriving by ship near Philadelphia triggered emergent partisan anxieties between the Federalists and Democratic-Republican (or Republican) party. In a political climate of paranoia and accusations of treason, each side charged conspiracy—Republicans saw the specter of English perfidy, while Federalists countered the ships were merely of French royalists. The incident was one of many partisan battles occurring alongside the rise of L'Ouverture. With the Federalist administration of John Adams in power, the U.S. at first supported L'Ouverture and independence for the colony, consistent with the Quasi-War against France. Searching for political advantage as the election of 1800 approached, Republicans linked L'Ouverture with despotism, and, by extension, smeared the Federalists as "betrayers of American honor" (147). The path to electoral success—one that would become iterative for both parties in the coming centuries—pivoted upon a rejection of transnational "universal rights," and instead they defined revolutionary "equality through whiteness" (148). Intensifying Federalist antagonisms with France, which aligned their interests with Saint Domingue's independence, opened them to attacks about why a slave republic

would support "an independent nation of ex-slaves" (162). The sixth chapter brings this narrative to climax in Jefferson's victory in the election of 1800 and after, and treats L'Ouverture's consolidation of power, Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion, and Haitin independence though American reactions to Gabriel's rebellion and Jefferson's embargo between 1805-1807—a moment when Haitian voices became "increasingly silenced" (212).

As readers might suspect given Dun's copious reading of primary sources, *Dangerous Neighbors* should become a potent history for those interested in recovering the nuances and contingencies in how the Haitian Revolution changed the form of ruling class politics in the United States. Dun's history provides helpful context, too, for those seeking frameworks for the emergence of white power and transnational histories of abolition in early America. For readers interested in additional philosophical, political, and cultural perspectives along these lines, though, they would do well to examine the substantial selections in the volume of essays edited by Dillon and Drexler, *The Haitian Revolution and the Early United States.* Divided into three parts of five chapters each—*Histories, Geographies,* and *Textualities*—the collection features some well-established authors on the Haitian Revolution, as well as some significant figures in fields of nineteenth century American Studies, literary studies, and history, many of whom have books addressing the Haitian Revolution and early American culture (including Dun, whose chapter in the volume refreshes the ways Philadelphia newspapers in the early 1790s read and misread early revolutionary events in Saint Domingue).

In an introduction that addresses many of the historical intersections and ironies in play for the text as a whole, Dillon and Drexler situate the volume as an exploration of the "mutually entwined relations between Haiti and the United States," but also aim readers to consider the ways both the U.S. and Haiti contained a contradictory "tension between the revolutionary politics of republicanism and an economy fueled by slave labor" (1, 5). Citing the arguments of those who posit the Haitian Revolution as central to the development of modernity, such as Joan (Colin) Dayan, Susan Buck-Morss, David Scott, and Nick Nesbitt, the editors conclude their introductory remarks through their own gloss on Trouillot's "unthinkable" revolution, arguing that "the silencing to which Trouillot refers is not an erasure and it would be a mistake to understand it as such" (15). Indeed, Dillon and Drexler contend that the scholars in their volume help to "redress the silencing" through the "evocation of new ontologies, new narratives, and new geographies" (15). The volume certainly succeeds in this respect.

In part one, *Histories*, Fick examines Toussaint L'Ouverture's relations with the U.S., Great Britain, and France in the period from 1797 to 1801. In an useful account of how economic conditions in Saint Domingue shaped the character of L'Ouverture's political choices, Fick provides readers with a generous background of the colonial intrigues in play, as well as the rather incredible demands made on L'Ouverture: defending emancipation, restoring export commodities to fund that defense, and contending with imperial markets to keep such trade open. Fick's essay contains a range of reflections that will interest those with questions about

L'Ouverture's revival of the plantation system so soon after insurrections by the enslaved, and in the process lays bare how the Haitian "revolutionary paradigm exposed the many hidden faces of modernity" with which he contended (41). Her essay is one of several in the collection that examine the Haitian Revolution in the larger context of Atlantic political economy. In part two, for example, David Geggus dialogues with the contention of scholars such as Fick and others about the reasons for Napoleon Bonaparte's decision to sell the Louisiana territory to the United States after the failed French invasion to reclaim the colony. After a thorough review of historical actors and factors, he ultimately decides it is "open to question," but that, given France lost every colony by 1811, its ultimate ability to keep Louisiana was "not strong" regardless of the trigger for the sale (129). The two chapters renew general attention to the ways Haitian independence is inseparable from Atlantic geopolitics, and vice versa.

Ivy G. Wilson's contention that the nineteenth century iconography of Toussaint L'Ouverture constitutes an important part of the "counterarchives about Haiti" in the U.S. imaginary, especially those created by African American "intellectuals and cultural producers," is a provocative and profound contribution to the collection (81). The claim represents the complimentary inverse of the racist "silencing" of Trouillot's "unthinkable," in part by decolonizing archival silences with readings of new texts that reveal the rich textures and dimensions of the ways L'Ouverture came to embody sustaining forms of knowledge and affect about the Haitian Revolution throughout the long nineteenth century. Embedding his argument first in an 1864 portrait of L'Ouverture that appeared in the *New Orleans Tribune*, Wilson proceeds to map the iconography of L'Ouverture as an "aesthetic practice" that allowed black artists and writers to "enter into debates about the diaspora and Pan-Africanism, black independence and sovereignty, and chattel slavery in the United States and elsewhere" (82). Turning to authors such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Frank J. Webb, and William Wells Brown, among other notable authors, Wilson traces a new genealogy of the ways Haiti persisted in U.S. cultural memory through the Civil War. His approach is a crucial accompaniment to the vigorous new interpretations of extant primary sources we see in work like Dun's *Dangerous Neighbors*.

In a similar sense, Laurent Dubois's contribution to the volume charts new paths by examining the life of Anténor Firmin, "one of Haiti's greatest intellectuals and statesmen" (100). Grounding his essay in the larger currents of Haitian and U.S. political movements of the nineteenth century, Dubois in part focuses on exchanges between Firmin and Frederick Douglass in the early 1890s, when the latter was President Benjamin Harrison's minister to Haiti. While under instructions to negotiate docking privileges for the U.S. navy at Môle-Saint-Nicolas, Douglass met Firmin in Haiti and agreed the arrogant posture of the Harrison administration was an impediment to the deal. When the U.S. sent warships as intimidation, Firmin ended the negotiations. In subsequent years—after a failed presidential run—Firmin remained a potent political writer, and died exiled in 1911 predicting the possibility of Haiti falling "under foreign control" (110). In

his focus on Firmin, Dubois reminds scholars that the story of Haitian politics continues long after the revolution, and deserves close study. In part three, Marelen L. Daut's chapter on the prolific writings of Baron de Vastey, a respected author of literature and anti-colonialism in the early nineteenth century, also makes a strong case for returning to the extant print archive for Haitian authors who necessitate closer attention. Noting that the "silencing of Vastey's work indicates a serious disciplinary problem for early American studies," Daut offers an especially compelling reading of Vastey's political writing, as well as the ways U.S. newspapers promoted Vastey's ideas to promote the formal recognition of Haiti (292). In addition to finding new methodologies and counterarchives for understanding the Haitian Revolution in the early United States, Daut and Dubois's attention to Vastey and Firmin suggest there's a need for significant projects simply reading major Haitian intellectuals of the nineteenth century.

Duncan Faherty covers similar territory to Dun's *Dangerous Neighbors* in the collection's third chapter, examining "ill-founded reports of a rumored invasion" in the *Washington Federalist* of "French Negroes" off the coast of South Carolina in late 1802 (60). "As long as the indeterminacy raised by Caribbean revolutionary violence remained quarantined offshore," Faherty writes, "the United States remained able to at least tangentially imagine itself as free from the vexing issues of racially inflected conceptions of equality and liberty" (78). This analysis is consistent with the subsequent embargo Jefferson placed on newly independent Haiti two years later, and compliments Cristobal Silva's chapter in part two of the collection, *Geographies*, which treats the yellow fever and other disease outbreaks in the late eighteenth century in terms of "how categories like citizenship and community constituted themselves (130). Along somewhat similar thematic lines, Kieran M. Murphy's chapter traces how colonial authorities in Saint Domingue perceived Mesmer's doctrine of animal magnetism, a discourse that began circulating in the 1780s, to be a "major source of civil unrest" among the enslaved prior to the outbreak of revolution (145). In a compelling sequence of claims, Murphy provocatively links the implications of Mesmer's theory to political pamphlets about human rights in the period, and ultimately to Joan (Colin) Dayan's cultural analysis of Vodou and zombi possession as practices of revolutionary agency.

Edlie Wong's contribution to the volume deepens the themes of contagion and emergence that resonate though these chapters. Her essay connects Haitian President Jean-Pierre Boyer's successful conquest of Spanish Santo Domingo in the 1820s to southern "racialized discourse of disease emergence" in the United States following the 1822 Denmark Vesey conspiracy (163). The Negro Seaman Acts passed in South Carolina and other southern states targeted black sailors "as a menace to slaveholding localisms," implying a continuing threat between Haitian independence and achievement and the status of black enslaved people in the U.S. (165). Wong's expansive chapter further details how Boyer countered such counter-revolutionary currents by trying to encourage black emigration to Haiti, and connects his initiative to sympathetic literary sentiments among con-

temporary black intellectuals and authors, including Prince Saunders, the likely author of a notable short story on the Haitian Revolution, as well as William Wells Brown, who drew upon representations of L'Ouverture and revolutionary Saint Domingue in his novel *Clotel* and a lecture on the revolution.

Likewise, in a relevant investigation of Prince Saunders's *Haytian Papers* and its idealistic promotion of black labor ideology, Colleen C. O'Brien's chapter deepens the volume's attention to the idea of black emigration, as well as how ideas of land ownership, wage labor, and education developed in black thought of the antebellum period, and specifically in the work of James McCune Smith. O'Brien's attention to McCune's advocacy for "land reform and an alternative to free labor ideology" in the 1840s should be meaningful for making transbellum linkages between this period and the experimentations and repression of such reforms during and after the Civil War, not to mention on the rise of southern sharecropping during and after Reconstruction (203).

Three of the chapters in the volume's third part, *Textualities*, address cultural, performative, and literary interpretations of the Haitian Revolution in early America. Siân Silyn Roberts reads Leonara Sansay's epistolary novel *Secret History; Or, the Horrors of St. Domingo* (1808) for how the novel's "model of social relations" of freely circulating people, commodities, and news interrupts nationalized boundaries of being and feeling, and how in turn the novel's representation of such "cosmopolitan sociability" depends on how characters access such circulations of culture and information (251). In his chapter on the 1795 performance of John Murdock's sentimental comedy *The Triumphs of Love; or, Happy Reconciliation* at Philadelphia's Chesnut Street Theater, Peter P. Reed argues that Murdock's "rebellious black characters provided audiences with a safe way of encountering Haiti's [sic] unthinkable violence," and to imagine their relationship to its actual refugees then arriving to the city (266). Drawing on the work of Sibylle Fischer, Reed cogently reads the play's choices as a case study in the "slow-moving process of repression and substitution" that Trouillot associates with the "'general silencing'" of the Haitian Revolution (269). Expanding this idea in a different direction, in her chapter Gretchen J. Woertendyke's makes a thrilling wager that the revolution remaps the emergence of the American romance and gothic novel as genres for imagining "blackness" as a "specter of possibility and horror across the Atlantic world" (232). Casting her claims about authors such as William Cobbett and Charles Brockden Brown in a romantic print culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in which "tropes of blackness and foreign invasion" circulated widely, Woertendyke distinguishes the American from the British gothic not just for its preoccupation with race, but for the transnational ways race arrived via the Caribbean (234).

The long influence of the Haitian Revolution on black American thought in the nineteenth century also defines Drexler and Ed White's essay. For them, L'Ouverture's 1801 Constitution "joins, if not inaugurates, a tradition in African American letters of holding white social and political morality to account for its more abstract and universalizing strands" (214). Their reading of the Constitution,

and especially how they situate it within U.S. politics at the turn of the eighteenth century, is instructive; rather than follow the thrust of their contention about its effects on black literature, the essay deftly reads the ways various aspects of both the Constitution and L'Ouverture emerge in partisan newspapers, with modification and appropriation, to reflect U.S. anxieties about race and slavery. Republicans and Federalists each created their own "political fantasy" about L'Ouverture: for the latter, he represented "authoritarian narcissism," while for Republicans he signified "paranoid race war" (230).

In fact, Drexler and White's focus on "race war" echoes Woertendyke's citation of Jefferson's fears, expressed in a 1797 letter, that the "revolutionary storm sweeping the globe" might inspire the enslaved of the U.S. to rebel, a fear she links to a Bryan Edwards pamphlet of the same year warning that "slave revolution would become infectious and both whites and blacks would be 'exterminated'" (235, 233). Jefferson and Edward's fears make for an ironic transition to the final text reviewed here, Kay Wright Lewis's *A Curse Upon This Nation*. In an exceptionally well-documented argument that spans several centuries, Lewis argues that the threat of genocide against black Americans, supported by multiple examples of colonial and post-revolutionary acts of white Americans, became a cultural structure that enabled acts of horrific barbarism against enslaved and emancipated black people. While Lewis first focuses less on the Haitian Revolution than on the African, European, and colonial American antecedents for subsequent exterminatory violence both real and imagined, she carefully traces how one of its stereotyped and prolific legacies—the inextricability of race war and black freedom—transformed the practices of oceanic enslavement and continental genocides into a crucial cultural logic undergirding the maintenance of southern slavery and racial segregation during and after the Civil War.

Lewis's arguments on the specter of racial extermination explains why women, children, and others who posed no obvious threat to white Americans so often became the targets of demonic violence by white communities both before and after emancipation, a history she illustrates with the vicious burning and annihilation of Mary Turner of Lowndes County, Georgia in 1918, who was eight-months pregnant at the time, and whose child was cut from her and crushed after her death. Lewis traces Turner's savage murder, and so many like it, to "roots in the historical legacy of slavery," and, more importantly, to the ways "extermination was part of a racialized ideology used to sustain the institution of enslavement" (2). Moreover, Lewis contends that such ideology "exposes the probability that white southerners did not develop a new emotional state after the Civil War but were rather perpetuating an inherited set of ideas about black bodies and, indeed, black humanity" (2, 3). It's an alarming and yet perfectly reasonable argument, and one Lewis handles with courage and skill. In her introduction, Lewis wields her thesis within existing histories of slavery and racial violence, and offers the threat of extermination as a "palpable reason why slaves did not rebel more frequently," and why the frequent "killing of black women, children, and the elderly" reinforced that threat for many in the African

diaspora (8). Indeed, Lewis makes clear that survival itself was the central form of African and black resistance to slavery.

Her first chapter returns to the deep history of genocidal violence against Africans and indigenous people in North America. She contextualizes racial violence in the centuries of colonialism and enslavement within early European theories of total warfare and the complete annihilation of enemy combatants, including the "extermination of children," in a philosophy crudely described by its practitioners as "Nits will be Lice" (14). Threading the genealogy of such thinking through to Jefferson, she then transitions in her second chapter to considering how the African slave trade contributed a new dynamic to such violence, and even how the "war tactics of Africans on the Gold Coast paralleled the brutal theories behind English warfare," and which in turn propelled the participation of African slave-trading nations in trafficking black people across the Atlantic.

Meanwhile, Lewis depicts American colonists as increasingly afraid of their enslaved plantation laborers even as they grew more dependent on them, relating that what "white colonists feared most was their total annihilation in internecine warfare" (47). Her third chapter details, in turn, how Africans in the diaspora used their vast knowledge of military tactics to plan and execute revolts. She thus shows how "fears of a black revolution eventually occurred in Saint-Domingue and resonated throughout the African diaspora into the nineteenth century" (60). Scholars of the Haitian Revolution will find much of interest in her account of it, which she situates in a longer Atlantic timeline, and which she uses as a relief for Denmark Vesey's attempt at insurrection in 1822.

In a powerful reading of Nat Turner's revolt and the widespread violence that accompanied white reaction, Lewis argues that the insurrection "was the moment whites always feared, and they did what they warned they would do in response" (83). Many in the southern white community, in fact, warned that another such revolt would lead to genocide, and such warnings occurred as the number of race riots against black Americans surged even in the North. Even more, she provides a litany of examples from the testimony of enslaved Americans, including Henry Box Brown, who explained that after Turner many African Americans took seriously that the impunity of violence against black lives could conceivably escalate beyond the fierce reprisals already occurring. In her next chapter, Lewis exposes the role that ideas of black extermination played in the 1832 Virginia debates about whether the "solution" to the danger slaves posed to white people would be "colonization, enslavement, or extermination" (109). Her sixth chapter follows the thread into debates about re-opening the African slave trade in the 1850s, when southerners defended their ability to control additional new African slaves through the strength of their repressive violence; in reply, black writers like James McCune Smith taunted that doing so would set off a "Haitian model of resistance" in Africa (139).

At the same time, her stunning seventh chapter on John Brown's failed raid on Harper's Ferry contends that Brown's assumption that black slaves would rally to his cause was based on faulty republican premises of white masculinity

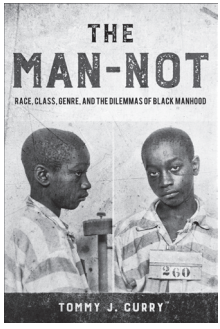
and violence, and grounded in romantic racialism and the "ethnic chauvinism of northern humanitarians" (147). By contrast, black male ideas about "manhood… did not sanction exposing the black community, particularly black women and children, to violent retribution" (143). For the enslaved, the legacies of white retaliations after the Turner revolt, and the continuing threat of mass murders against black people as a whole, were still decisive on the eve of the Civil War. Poignantly, she details a wave of murders against African Americans in Virginia, Alabama, and Texas after Harper's Ferry. Her eighth chapter notes that such massacres continued during the Civil War, as in the Battle of Marks Mills, Arkansas in 1864, when rebel soldiers admitted killing 80 unarmed black people, including women and children, or during wartime northern race riots in Detroit, Chicago, Cincinnati, and, of course, New York. Such incidents were set against the fears of those such as Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, who wondered whether emancipation might lead to exterminatory warfare against black Americans. Immediately after the war, Lewis argues for seeing the slaughter of black communities in cities like 1866 Memphis, which included women and children, through the prism of total warfare. In the rest of the chapter, she elucidates the framework of extermination as a window into the dozens of urban white riots of the Jim Crow era, and, in her conclusion, convincingly traces the influence of such apocalyptic violence into the thinking of civil rights era intellectuals and leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X.

Given her scope, argument, and evidence, Lewis's paradigm-shifting book should be treated as a stark touchstone for future scholarship in African American history and American studies, but also scholars of slavery, genocide, and civil rights. It also leaves open projects that might seek to link her claims and texts more extensively to the Haitian Revolution and its aftershocks in the nineteenth century United States. Indeed, *A Curse Upon This Nation*— like much of the history of Haiti and early America that emerges in the texts reviewed here—should force readers to consider not whether or not the kinds of holocausts imagined in the United States were unthinkable in the moments when they occurred or almost did, but also whether they remain unthinkable now, and, if so, how the past might teach us to think again.

Review Essay

Studying Black Men Seriously: A Reading of Tommy Curry's *The Man-Not*

Brad Stone



THE MAN-NOT: Race, Class, Genre, and the Dilemmas of Black Manhood. By Tommy J. Curry. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 2017.

Tommy Curry's *The Man-Not* is required reading for all who work at the intersection of race and gender, especially in the current political milieu in which dead Black male bodies are frequently on display in America. As such, the book is a timely contribution.

I begin with a summary of the book and the arguments made in the chapters. I then focus on what I take to be the two main contributions made by the book: the expansion of intersectionality to include Black men's experiences and the critique of certain presuppositions that wrongly force Black men into hegemonic structures of masculinity. I then address two concerns I have about the book and offer responses to those concerns. The first deals with the book's self-referential angst; the second deals with my worry about creating yet another opportunity for philosophy not to become more inclusive.

0026-3079/2018/5802-067$2.50/0 American Studies, 58:2 (2019): 67–77

Summary

The five main chapters of *The Man-Not* are relatively independent of each other. What connects them together is a general framework outlined in the Introduction, Conclusion, and Epilogue. I will begin by discussing this general frame, followed by summaries of the five inner chapters.

Curry begins the introduction by addressing the long-prevailing caricature of Black men as the "Black macho." Although theory is supposed to question the presuppositions it brings from the everyday world, this caricature entered theory unquestioned. The book will seek to remove this presupposition from theoretical works going forward. It is already difficult to write about Black people correctly, as scholars in African American Studies immediately point out, because racism in the academy has already adopted a Deficiency Paradigm in its study of Black people, viewing Blacks as passive objects of history instead of active agents of history. In the case of Black men, this deficiency-oriented approach precludes the ways in which Black men's masculinity is itself worthy of study, especially at a time marked by the unjustified yet permitted deaths of Black men in American society.

The title, *The Man-Not*, seeks to separate Black men from the patriarchal (white) masculinity that is often, incorrectly, attributed to them. To present this, Curry introduces the notion of "genre" as a substitution for the word "gender," which is itself a patriarchal term to address how women are different from men. The word "gender" is also a racist term insofar as the standard for "man" and "woman" in such a classification is already a white understanding of men and women. Black masculinity, Curry argues, falls outside of patriarchy, since "racial maleness is not coextensive with or synonymous to the formulations of masculinity, or patriarchy, offered by white reality" (7). At the heart of his argument is his critique of the Mimetic Thesis, which asserts that non-white men seek to become equivalent to white men. Curry challenges this thesis. What if Black men do not *want* to become white men in any way or form? The acceptance of the Mimetic Thesis in much of the race/gender/sexuality literature implicitly grants white masculinity the highest value. Connected to the Mimetic Thesis is the notion of hegemonic masculinity, that puts all male persons into the same group, making white masculinity, and all of the problems it entails, the case for all men, even those men who are systematically excluded and even killed by white men out of a fear that someone is even trying to be equal to or surpass them.

In fact, Curry claims, there is sufficient data to show that Black men in general are more anti-patriarchy than any other group of men, which should make them potential allies in the movement against (white) patriarchy. Like women, LGBTQQIA people, and other men of color, Black men are victimized by white patriarchy in exact ways. Curry calls this victimization "Black Male Vulnerability," signifying that Black men not only are oppressed qua non-white but also *as*

male; the "being-male" of Black men is involved in their very oppression. Thus, the oppression of Black men is at once racial, gendered, and sexual.

Intersectionality has become an established theory for connecting race, gender, and sexuality as cooperative and codetermining forms of oppression, but it tends to favor people of color (race), women (gender), and LGBTQQIA people (sexuality) in an attempt to show how different forms of oppression overlap or "intersect" each other. Although this favoring is helpful, it has a blindness about men that makes Black men "men" in the same way white men are "men." This is problematic since intersectionality is quite good at noticing that women of color are not "women" in the same way that white women are "women."

Thus, *The Man-Not* is a book that attempts to nuance the way in which Black men are not only not part of the patriarchal scheme but also resisters of such patriarchy. It is therefore a corrective to the prevailing understanding of intersectional analysis. As such, the book makes the case for Black Male Studies, a "liberatory knowledge schema" that treats Black men, and the Black men who write about them, as "subjects worthy of study" (230). Claiming that "[t]he Black male is unthought" (197), Curry promotes a more positive approach to theorizing about Black men. In the epilogue, Curry recounts his own frustrations with trying to publish articles written on black men (which is funny only insofar as his publication rate is actually very high) and being rejected "in the name of" feminism, especially Black feminism. Curry wants to understand why there is such a resistance against Black male thinkers writing on Black men. He points to two ways the academy discriminates against Black men: racial chauvinism, a patronizing judgment about whether a Black scholar can write on whatever they wish (in this case, Black men, although academic "gatekeeping" in general has serious racist, sexist, and heterosexist consequences); and a racial misandry that "celebrates his [the Black man] death, finds humor in his rape, and exhibits indifference to his suffering" (233). This discrimination makes it hard to publish on Black men outside of the Deficiency Paradigm or to even be a Black male publishing in the academy at all.

In the conclusion of the book, Curry points out that patriarchy's power is not aided by the presence of Black men, and that Black men are often the victims of this patriarchal power. Why are Black men therefore presented as the poster child of patriarchy? Black men face gendered and sexual discrimination in addition to racial discrimination. How is intersectionality blind to this fact? Curry argues that intersectional theorists have adopted Dominance Theory as their theory of gender. Curry proposes in the book that replacing Dominance Theory with the Subordinate Male Target Hypothesis would show that nonwhite men are one of the many targets of (white) patriarchy, not fellow coconspirators.

I now turn to the five inner chapters. The first chapter, "On Mimesis and Men," addresses the ways in which Black men are seen and treated as treats to (white) patriarchy, not as allies. To do this, Curry points to the historical record

to look at who is more likely to cooperate with patriarchy. White women are still the greatest allies of patriarchy in virtue of whiteness. The historical record shows this (not to mention the majority of white women, highly-educated and "uneducated," who voted for Donald Trump in the name of the patriarchal values they sought to conserve). Curry points out how one often excludes the master's wife from the tales of the horrors of slavery. These wives are not, after all, innocent passive bystanders. Additionally, there are ways in which Black people have participated in patriarchy without it being necessary to be male. Using Anna Julia Cooper's notions of bourgeois respectability and morality as an example, Curry discusses the way that Black people's desire to be bourgeois aided patriarchy instead of dismantling it. The task before us now would be to dismantle (white) patriarchy, and Black men have a role to play in that which does not result in self-destruction.

"Lost in a Kiss?" offers a reading of Eldridge Cleaver's *The Book of Lives* to complexify Cleaver's explicit misogyny found in *Soul on Ice*. Exploring Cleaver's homosexual relationship with a fellow prisoner presents the racist, sexist, and heterosexist ways carceral logic marks Black male bodies. Generalizing from the prison example, Curry discusses the sexualization of Black male bodies in general as a form of oppression. Citing Fanon's notion of the "phobogenic object," Curry discusses the Black male body as the target for white sexual anxieties and desires, resulting in the (homo)eroticization of Black male flesh. It is this sexual anxiety and desire that creates the Black Male Rapist motif that, as we will see in a later chapter, excuses the rape, assault, and death of Black men and boys. Curry redirects Cleaver's misogyny through the sexual and sexualized violence that white women have perpetually perpetuated on Black male bodies: "white womanhood . . . is the lynchpin of white supremacy" (103). We see this historically in the lynching of Black men, often to preserve whiteness. We also see it in rape, which Curry presents as the secret technology against Black men. Black men were raped in slavery, not just Black women. Even today Black boys and men are victims of sexual assault and rape. By making rape conceptually that which can only happen to (white) women, the ways in which sexual violence were used to control slaves and present-day Black people of any gender is understated. Curry does not go as far as to correlate having been a victim of sexual violence to the likelihood of one committing future acts of sexual violence, but Curry's reading of Cleaver in this regard opens up that possibility.

The third chapter, "The Political Economy of Niggerdom," offers statistical analyses of Black Male Vulnerability, defined in the introduction as "the disadvantages that Black males endure compared with other groups . . . the vulnerable condition—the sheer fungibility—of the Black male as a living terror able to be killed, raped, or dehumanized at any moment, given the disposition of those who encounter him" (29). An immediate example of this is the police's policy of stating that one felt one's life to be in danger by the presence of the unarmed Black body, which in turn justifies the shooting. All one needs to do is

express that one had an emotional response to blackness, and the death of Black men is then pardoned. Most of the material presented in this chapter is already in the literature concerning Black men: poverty rates, educational attainment, employment, etc. What is presented in a new light here is the bidirectionality of intimate partner violence in domestic violence cases. Curry does not present this data in order to deny that Black women are not also abused; rather, he does so in order to describe the centrality of violence itself in Black men's lived experience. No one denies that there are Black men who abuse others. What no one asks is whether those Black men were themselves abused. The role of abuse—physical, emotional, and sexual—in Curry's book is particularly striking, and I will return to this fact later. The result of this violence is a fungibility that permits the death of Black men. It is this fungibility against which Curry fights.

Chapter 4, "Eschatological Dilemmas," presents the other main theme Curry addresses throughout the book, the question of death as the condition for the possibility of Black male existence. Although one can existentially state that death is the condition for all human beings' respective existence, Curry highlights the way in which death is specifically reserved in a biopolitical situation for Black people in general, and Black men in particular. Returning to the themes of rape and sexual abuse, Curry presents many different notions of death: physical death by police and violent neighborhoods, sexual violence and rape, emotional death, and social death through ghettoization and imprisonment. Since the physical death of Black men is permitted and normalized, it is no surprise that Black men are also victims of all of the other kinds of death. If one can shoot and kill a person without even a court case, one can definitely rape and sexually abuse that person. This is the experience of Black men in America.

The fifth chapter, "In the Fiat of Dreams," Curry poses a challenge to melioristic philosophies of race that (wrongfully) believe that racism is merely a matter of choice. Influenced by Derrick Bell, Curry presents a racial realism that serves as a corrective to the wishful thinking of hopeful Blacks and liberal whites that somehow all one has to do is wait for the old generation of racists to die out and then we will be in a great multicultural society. Racism, and the racial misandry that goes with it, is a central feature of our culture, not the behaviors of particular individuals. Our society is one in which it is permissible to treat Black men as scapegoats. Using the Subordinate Male Target Hypothesis, Curry highlights the ways in which control and use of non-white males is a requirement for the continuation of white supremacy. The death and political disenfranchisement of Black men is now normalized, even to the point of being misrepresented as somehow being a benefit of "male privilege." To the hopeful, Curry simply poses two questions: "What end can hope serve for the oppressed if the ultimate end of racism is death? Can hope even be justified in a white-supremacist society that murders Blacks to maintain its social order" (181)? The deaths of Black people, especially Black men, is a required element, not

an accidental feature, of American racism. Hopeful Blacks think that someday white people will behave better, and hopeful whites think that their racism is merely some accidental smudge on their moral fabric. Curry does not trust the promise that someday white people will be morally redeemed and cease to be racist. As a result, Curry promotes the idea of a non-suicidal "more just death" (187) instead of one more (many more) death(s) accepted by waiting for moral change in white people. Curry is aware that holding such a position is to ask for exclusion from the racist academy, but it is an argument that has to be made in the name of justice. Curry replaces hope with justice, but justice here does not mean the fulfillment of that for which one hopes.

Intersectionality and Hegemonic Masculinity

The main philosophical contribution of *The Man-Not* is the thesis that Black masculinity is intersectional and anti-hegemonic, although most people who work on intersectionality are mostly focused on the experiences of women of color and thus overlook this fact. Curry's criticism is not of intersectionality *per se* but a blind spot in its practice. Like women of color, race and gender are at play in the oppression of Black men, requiring a multidimensional approach to resisting oppression. Intersectionality has not adequately captured this fact, perhaps due to its origin in Black feminist thought. Finding themselves at the intersection of racism and sexism, Black women theorists addressed their experiences as both Black and women, aligning with men of color in the fight against racism and with women of all races in the fight against patriarchy.

Curry's account would require a more complex arrangement, an arrangement that I think intersectionality can accommodate (but simply has not done so). By uprooting Dominance Theory and replacing it with the Subordinate Male Target Hypothesis, one would see that patriarchy, as it is commonly named, refers to *white* patriarchy. Patriarchy is always already racial. Patriarchy controls (white) women in the way that racism controls (non-white) men and women. In fact, non-white persons, regardless of "sex," were *outside* of the notion of gender (hence Curry's use of the term "genre" instead of "gender"). Part of racist control over non-white men included racist and sexist techniques of oppression. In short, Black men are oppressed in a racist and sexist society for both their non-whiteness and their being men, a fact that can be overlooked if one were to assume that sexism is only perpetuated against women. It is important to differentiate Curry's claim here from the "what about men?" anti-feminist arguments made in response to the critique of patriarchy. When Curry writes that Black men are victims of the patriarchy, he is not suggesting that all men are; rather, he is pointing out that sexism is at work in racism, regardless of the gender of the non-white person.

Hegemonic notions of masculinity, perhaps summarized by James Baldwin when he speaks of the "American ideal of manhood," obfuscates the way in which Black men are themselves victims of sexist violence. Curry is quite thor-

ough in his treatment of violence in this book. The best work is in his account of rape as a racist technology against Black men. Rape is often theorized in terms of sexual violence perpetrated by a man against a woman. Curry is not suggesting in *The Man-Not* the old retort that "men can be raped, too;" rather, he singles out rape as a particular form of racial and sexual violence. By presenting both white men and white women as perpetuators of rape, Curry makes a powerful connection between power, desire, and violence as it pertains to Black women and men. The more traditional distinction was to discuss lynching as a racist practice done to Black men and rape as a racist and sexist practice done to Black women. Curry responds in two ways: first, he shows that the rape of Black men in the South—even if not of equal frequency with Black women—was an in-place method of controlling Black bodies; and second, he presents lynching as its own sexualized process and display of white racist sexual desire. Thus, both rape and lynching serve as sexual forms of racist violence.

The raping and lynching of Black men reformulated itself after slavery in the form of the Black male rapist fantasy. This fantasy, used to justify the mob murder of Black people (mostly Black men, although Black women were also lynched), is itself a continuation of rape. If rape is defined not simply as the violence of non-consensual sexual acts but the transference of guilt to the person violated, then the Black male rapist trope is itself a rape. The fantasy transfers the guilt of white sexual control over black bodies onto the black bodies themselves, regardless of the gender of those Black bodies. Curry's account broadens the racist notion that Black women cannot be raped to include the "cannot be raped and, in fact, must be the rapist" view of Black men. Only white women are truly raped, racist sexist logic demands, and even then only when non-white men are involved (thus, even consensual sex has to be rape). The myth of the Black male rapist is a masking of rape as a racist technology. Curry spends a lot of paragraphs throughout this book discussing the sexual violence to which Black men are subjected, either directly in terms of rape, molestation, and other forms of sexual abuse or in terms of being witness to such in the lives of others or by "association" through the Black male rapist trope. In fact, the sheer amount of violence absorbed by Black male bodies is a theme throughout the book, a theme that leaves one quite unsettled in its stark presentation yet also confirmed by Black male experience.

The Man-Not's title points to the fact that Black men not only are not "men" in the way that white men are "men," but that they are victims of the patriarchy in quite similar ways to women. Masculinity is not hegemonic, a fact that easily corresponds to the same fact about femininity. It is a mistake to assume that Curry's defense of Black men here is a form of anti-feminism; to the contrary, the experiences of Black men, if allowed theoretical space, offer additional examples of patriarchy's control over non-white, non-"male" (in the sense of "the man-not") bodies. Intersectionality has the resources to account for this, so I think it is more of an issue of practical application than theoretical deficiency. Since most of the work in intersectionality has been done by feminists, gender

defined in light of Dominance Theory has occluded the possibility of thinking of Black men as something other than mimetic patriarchs.

The two main targets of Curry's critique are not intersectionality and feminists who use the method; rather, they are the Dominance Theory and the Mimetic Hypothesis. The Mimetic Hypothesis presupposes that every male-identified person is trying to become more and more like white men. This supposition can be refuted, and Curry's book is a kind of manifesto for Black men who wish to resist the hegemonic pull of white masculinity on manhood. *The Man-Not* does a wonderful job at critiquing the Mimetic Hypothesis. Black men do not live lives sufficiently similar to white men, nor do they share in (white) patriarchy's desire for domination over women. The Dominance Theory is harder to defeat, especially given the overall power of (white) patriarchy over our culture. Perhaps Curry would argue that (white) patriarchy uses Black men's masculinity against women, transferring patriarchy through Black bodies in ways that do not benefit Black men and in fact harm them. More could have been said in the book about how women actually do experience patriarchy through Black men, and how that patriarchy undoes even Black men's progress towards overcoming patriarchy themselves.

Taking Black Lives (and Philosophers) Seriously

Another main theme in *The Man-Not* is the disregard or fungibility of Black male bodies. Curry is not only thinking about Black men killed at the hands of the police. In the Introduction Curry writes that he is afraid of being "forced to not speak" (1). He continues: "They shame me when I speak about Black men and boys . . . I hear: patriarch, sexist, misogynist as they condemn me for identifying the murderers and lynch mobs of Black males. They wear hoods with disciplinary embroidery . . . I fear they will make me be still; they will kill me" (1). This theme continues throughout the book. Is the academy against talking about Black men and boys? Is the academy against those who do? Is there room in the academy for Black men to write about themselves?

I agree with Curry that the academy has not made space for Black men (or Black people at all, regardless of gender) as subjects of inquiry. There is plenty of work that treats them as objects, often as statistical trends or the literal number of dead bodies shot by the police. The worry that *The Man-Not* will be negatively received permeates throughout the book, resulting in a very restless writing style and an agonizing self-referentiality that is found in most books that discuss race, gender, or both. There are hundreds if not thousands of philosophy books published every year, most of which are not so worried about whether the ideas presented therein will be published, let alone vehemently critiqued. I personally wish that Curry did not have to write with such urgency and angst about whether the book itself could do both what he wanted and what could be published. There are books published on quite banal matters: quotation

marks, tattoos, even sandwiches. None of those books defend their existence to the extent Curry's does.

What would it mean for the academy to take Black lives seriously? What would it mean for the academy to truly believe that the ideas of a Black philosopher may refute well-established accounts about race, let alone gender, let alone a topic that has nothing to do with either? I simply assert the right for *The Man-Not* to exist, and for the arguments presented therein to be discussed, debated, even refuted if need be. Philosophers can talk about Black men, after all, just as they talk about anything and everything else. If one disagrees with an argument in the book, one should write an article or even a whole book in response.

Of course, the plight of Black people in the academy mirrors life outside of the academy. The very meaning of Black lives now must be asserted by a hashtag, something so basic that it is embarrassing that one would have to utter #BlackLivesMatter in the 21st century. Black lives matter. Black thought matters. Black philosophers matter. Books written by Black philosophers matter. It is an insult to the intelligence to argue for something so basic.

I take exception to phrases used by Ishmael Reed and Charles Mills in their blurbs on the back of the book. Both mean well, and both may very well be correct given the political climate in which we find ourselves, but I worry nonetheless. Reed writes that "Curry has taken a bullet for the brothers." A book about Black men and boys being shot should not itself be equivalent to getting shot. And who fires this bullet, anyway? Are the shots fired from within the academy? Mills writes that this book is "[s]ure to ignite a firestorm of controversy." Perhaps this is true, but no one says this about most books, even if there could be a lot of discussion concerning the book's subject matter. Both comments confirm Curry's urgency to write, and I understand what they are saying, but it should not have to be like this.

I imagine an academy where scholars write books and articles about matters that concern them. There can be objections to what is written, of course: bad arguments must be refuted, errors must be corrected, and alternative accounts and theories must be presented. There should be nothing off limits or not allowed. One could argue that the topic of Black people had not appeared much in the past, but there are Black philosophers now, and they will bring up issues that concern them, and those issues might be different than what had been published heretofore. Regardless of gender, Black philosophers are quickly praised but seldom read, and the intentions of their writings rarely occur. They are immediately relegated to a subfield without grand impact on the discipline as a whole. The biggest worry I have about *The Man-Not* is not that it is controversial or that Curry will have "taken a bullet" for writing it. My biggest worry is that the conversations about Black men will continue as if the book had never been published: the Mimetic Thesis will continue to be held as if unchallenged, the Dominance Theory will continue to have absolute power over the discussion of the intersection of gender and race, and someone years from now will

write a book on the topic of Black men and boys and have the same angst I find in this book.

Taking Black lives and Black philosophers seriously requires taking the things they write about seriously. The current academic response is at best quietness and at worse death threats and intellectual lynching. The work of Black philosophers, including the works of Black women, are politically applauded but usually philosophically ignored outside of Black circles. I believe that a different future for Black thinkers is possible, but that will require the greater academy to change its attitude about non-white scholars and themes.

On the Creation of "Black Male Studies"

Curry advocates for Black Male Studies as a practical consequence of his book. I understand the need for the academic study of Black men, so I want to clarify that I am not arguing against studying Black masculinity with greater nuance than many currently do. I do wonder whether Black Male Studies can exist with any practical consequence other than the continuing fragmentation of knowledge in the academy.

This claim may sound weird coming from a former chair of an African American Studies department. I consider fields like African American Studies, Chicana/o Latina/o Studies, Women and Gender Studies, etc. indictment disciplines, academic fields that emerged out of the inability to do serious work in the "traditional" disciplines. The work done in these departments is important, significant, and usually more practically effective than what is done in standard disciplines. These disciplines usually have a different set of fundamental assumptions about the group being studied than what is found in traditional departments. African American Studies, for example, focuses on agency instead of deficiency, sees Africa as a source of civilization instead of a "third-world" colonial territory, and treats the history of African-descended Americans as a fundamental element of the greater American history instead of a subplot.

The problem lies in the difference between the intentions of those who partake in these fields and the intention of the greater academy for having such fields exist. Given the problems Curry faces in researching and writing about Black men, a field like Black Male Studies would be a welcome respite: "I can now write about what matters to me." Unfortunately, the academy has a different intention: "Now we will not have to deal with that topic!" Thus, all the erroneous presuppositions stay intact, and the battle for "recognition" continues generation after generation.

The accusation throughout *The Man-Not* is that the lives of Black men have not been taken seriously and thus old racist and sexist ideas about Black men persist even in spite of data and evidence. Creating a new discipline does nothing to change that problem. Interdisciplinary programs are vital for those who work in those fields, but they allow traditional subjects to avoid the much-needed revision of themselves. Using philosophy as my example here (both

Curry and I are (full) Professors of Philosophy, both of us having received undergraduate and doctoral degrees in philosophy), I want philosophy to become able to philosophically respond to the death of Black people, to allow Black thinkers' ideas to challenge and transform disciplinary assumptions and theorems. Doing so outside of philosophy frees philosophy from having to change its ways and take the ideas of non-whites and non-males (defined in terms of white patriarchy) seriously.

Black women and men in philosophy, along with members of other minority groups, have mastered the skills of the discipline and present arguments whose conclusions should change particular philosophical positions. Yet, they often are not even taken as serious challenges or criticisms. They become optional readings that prove diversity in a curriculum or some kind of proof that a professor is "not a racist." Even if such efforts are well-meant, they fail to force philosophy to change its ways. What should be done? Minority scholars are to write books and articles nonetheless, without regard to how the academy is going to take them.

I believe that one need not step outside of philosophy in order to the work that one does as a philosopher. It has become too easy for people of color and members of other minority groups to go to other departments instead of fighting the inertia of racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc. that we find throughout the discipline. That solution, I believe, is too easy and lets philosophy off the hook when the problem is not philosophy *per se* but the racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc. of a way-too-large number of philosophy professors.

The Man-Not is a book written by a Black male philosopher who wishes to address in a philosophical way the ideology that permits theory to turn a blind eye to the deaths of people the author cares about. It presents strong arguments and raises important questions about the intersection of race and gender in theory. I recommend everyone who works in this area to read it and, most of all, take it seriously.

Book Reviews

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

Reviews

CITY OF ISLANDS: Caribbean Intellectuals in New York. By Tammy L. Brown. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 2015.

In New York City, a literal *city of islands*, people from the Caribbean islands comprise over one third of its foreign-born population. Historian Tammy L. Brown traces the impact of English-speaking Caribbean-born immigrants from Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica in the early twentieth century while exposing the tensions between non-US blacks and African Americans. She meticulously documents their civic and social engagement in the city and their ability to fight against racism and sexism. Each of the seven chapters each highlight a specific intellectual and show the primary influence of their family life and Caribbean culture.

Chapter 1 "Caribbean New York", focuses on Trinidadian born Jazz-pianist Hazel Scott to analyze the life of Caribbean immigrants to New York. By describing her marriage to Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Brown argues that the social and political encounters between Caribbean immigrants and American-born blacks were complex and filled with animosity. Chapter 2 "Ethelred Brown and the Character of New Negro Leadership" analyzes the life of the Jamaican born preacher Egbert Ethelred Brown through his upbringing and conversion from the Methodist church to the Unitarian church in Jamaica. Brown argues that he uses pan-Caribbean solidarity in his sermons and speeches as a strategy to advance his own political agenda. Chapter 3 "Richard B. Moore and Pan-Caribbean Consciousness" relates the life of the Barbadian communist, socialist and anti-colonial leader Richard B. Moore. He moved to New York at an early age and was influenced and shaped by both Caribbean and African-American intellectuals such as Ethelred Brown, Chandler Owen, Arturo Schomburg, Cyril Briggs to name but a few. He was also greatly influenced by Frederick Douglass and considered education as the path to freedom. Through his poetry, speeches and articles Moore prescribes equal rights for justice, social and economic betterment of all people of African descent. In chapter 4 "Pearl Primus and the Performance of African Diasporic Identities," Brown depicts the life and 50-year career of choreographer and dancer Pearl Primus as a model of Caribbean women artist-activists who fought for social and racial justice through their art, notably

poetry, choreography, interviews and other writings. Brown notes that Primus is part of the lineage of women who use their work and their fame to be "warriors for social justice" (97) and that she "use[s] dance as a mode of political protest in Jim Crow America…at a time when black bodies were criminalized, demonized, mocked and physically attacked" (99). In Brown's view, through her work she forged "a theoretical bridge between two of the most significant movements in the history of modern American art: the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts movement" (103). Through her multiculturalism and African-centered consciousness in her art and her personal life Primus marked the stage for generations of Caribbean and American-born women and men.

When Shirley Chisholm ran for president in 1972 she was the first black candidate for a major party's presidential nomination. Prior to that in 1968 she became the first black woman in Congress. Chapter 5 "Shirley Chisholm and the Style of Multicultural Democracy" analyzes the political career of one of the most influential black woman leaders of that era. The child of Bajan immigrants, Chisholm used her political might to fight for civil rights and women's rights, which are intrinsically connected. She notes, "It is true that women are second-class citizens, just as black people are…I want the time to come when we can be as blind to sex as we are to color" (147). As a black immigrant woman, she could relate to various constituencies 1960 and 70s New York. Brown asserts that Chisholm's "transcultural status" made her appealing. Being a part of American and Bajan culture Chisholm was very conscious of the complexity of her dual identity and the tensions between Caribbean and Black Americans. She reflects: "It is wrong, because the accident that my ancestors were brought as slaves to the islands while black mainland natives' ancestors were brought as slaves to the States is really not important, compared to the heritage of black brotherhood and unity in the face of oppression that we have" (147). Brown describes the Congressional Black Caucus's failure to endorse her in the 1972 campaign as another example of the larger tension between the two groups. Through the analysis of Chisholm's biography Brown reveals the ways in which she embraced the tenets of multiculturalism and intersectionality to advance her political career and fight for justice because she was "the candidate of the *people of America*" (157).

Chapter 6 "Paule Marshall and the Voice of Black Immigrant Women" portrays the ways in which Marshall affords a voice to the experience of black immigrant women through her novels. As a second generation American she presents an insider's view of the diversity of black immigrants in New York. She was "concern[ed] with 'reconciling' her multiple identities [to] reflect the cultural clashes among American-born and foreign blacks" (162). Brown challenges the simplistic idea shared by several scholars that the Caribbean psyche is able to handle injustice better than American born because slavery was abolished earlier in the islands. Rather, she argues that Caribbean immigrants lived through the racism in the United States in exchange for the economic benefits that they gained. As one of the most important literary voices of the twentieth and twenty first centuries, Paule Marshall exposes the complexity of bi-culturalism and the various negotiations of identities and being the *other* whether from the point of view of immigrant status, language, race, class or gender.

Brown concludes the book with the title "'Garvey's Ghost': Life after Death." She describes how New York City by its very nature and demographics made it an ideal place for Caribbean and American born intellectuals to mingle, argue and form alliances and negotiate tensions. Ending with Marcus Garvey is a way to bring together the alliances and tensions that continue to be forged between the two groups. She provides an overview of Garvey's influence in the development of black consciousness ethos in popular culture in the black diaspora. Ultimately, Brown contends that being black does not automatically

mean shared values and struggles. Cultural, historical, ethnic, national and class identities matter on many levels.

This important book illuminates that New York has long been a space that allows for the diversity of blackness. Through the study of the personal, political and social lives of these key intellectuals in transcultural and transnational contexts, Brown demonstrates that they have been shaped by several factors: the historical moment in which they lived, their family and community upbringing, the sense of pride they felt in their blackness and their encounter with other intellectuals during their lifetimes. Ultimately, what Brown shows is how these various individuals constantly evolved within and were influenced by their larger milieu and events: the black power movement, the Harlem Renaissance and the feminist movement to name but a few.

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HOW THE OTHER HALF LOOKS: The Lower East Side and the Afterlives of Images. By Sara Blair. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. 2018.

Playing off the title of Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives* (1890), Sara Blair analyzes the visual history of New York City's Lower East Side, beginning in the early 1800s and ending in the 21st century. Utilizing paintings, newspapers, magazines, films, literature, and principally photographs, Blair's effort is an engaging work that illuminates cultural, social, and political transformations transpiring within a historic location. In Blair's own words, the book "offers a site-specific account of visual experience, practice, and experimentation, and considers how these inform literary and everyday narratives of America, its citizens, and its modernity" (1). While the title may lead us to anticipate Jacob Riis serving as a significant reference point, Blair steers clear of rehashing the numerous studies of his work and brings to the forefront a wide array of visuals that progress through the accumulated significance of the Lower East Side. Both the streets and dwellings—along with the masses living within these urban spaces—are at the forefront in an effort to illuminate why and how this neighborhood continues to be prominently depicted in a multitude of media forms.

Within each of the six chapters, Blair isolates a particular time by extrapolating both richly contextual and often overlooked images of the Lower East Side. There is a social representation that encases each time period under analysis, one that changes with the decades as well as with the various media forms. The social reality, though, appears for the most part to entail a bleak outlook; indeed, Blair seldom emphasizes positive aspects of the neighborhood and instead engages with artistic depictions of the disadvantaged and outcast. Throughout the text, the material created by both the camera and video recorder serve as the primary apparatuses through which each period is discussed. Literature and poetry are also central, such as Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep* (1934) and Allen Ginsberg's "Kaddish" (1961). This plethora of visual and literary resources allows Blair to concretely ground the argument that the Lower East Side, while historically a gateway for immigrants into the United States, is an atypical locality that generates limitless fodder for creative output.

Essential to the text are the numerous photographs and movie stills that enhance Blair's position and enliven the reading by adding a layer of visual engagement. The backdrop of modern architecture is thematic through many of the chapters, in that the tenements, alleys, and streets were threatened by the encroaching infrastructure of capitalist America. Of additional note is that the media forms incorporated are particularly dependent on the physicality of the neighborhood, essentially demonstrating that how the other half

looks is often contingent on their location within the Lower East Side. Overall, Blair's critical selection of content—as well as the corresponding visuals—assist in forwarding the argument that this area of New York City is fundamentally divergent from its other environs. The Lower East Side is a geographically restricted yet artistically unbounded realm for documenting this critically important district.

Wayne E. Arnold
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THE GENIUS OF PLACE: The Geographic Imagination in the Early Republic. By Christopher C. Apap. Durham: University of New Hampshire Press. 2016.

The first chapter of Christopher Apap's *The Genius of Place: The Geographic Imagination in the Early Republic* usefully identifies four discourses that showcase a fundamental shift in Jacksonian America's understanding of space and its reorientation after the War of 1812 from the global to the local: geographical textbooks and classroom instruction; the picturesque as an aesthetic mode; the travel industry and the rise of travel writing; and reconsiderations of the colonial past (24-25). Rooted in these perspectival shifts, Apap performs a series of illuminating close readings of the "sectional" imaginary in novels, sermons, and political speeches beginning in 1816 and concluding with the publication of Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Nature* in 1836. This twenty-year span produces "an imaginative literature deeply invested in consolidating sectional identity" (10). We discover how the picturesque in Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Redwood* (1824) enlarges a sectional New England locality as a means of composing national union, and the ways in which James Fenimore Cooper's use of the picturesque mode informs the collective pursuit of shared goals by "sectional representatives" in the Middle States (81). From there, Apap turns to geographical space in Daniel Webster's "Second Reply" to Senator Robert Hayne during the South Carolina nullification crisis, a speech reliant on a sectional rhetoric that posits New England as a model for the nation against the South's short sightedness. Because of the South's *latitudinal* orientation, it fails to "see" the North and thus the true vision of nationhood.

Elsewhere, the sectional impulse in southern sketches and historical romances by John Pendleton Kennedy and William Gilmore Simms remaps generic conventions into a distinct literature of the South. Writers out of the Mississippi River valley like Daniel Drake employ a similar creative methodology to articulate the West as distinct, yet fundamental, to a cohesive national body. At this point, Apap does well to reaffirm his argument, which is not to recreate another scholarly portrait of a unified national imaginary that adheres, despite its political and cultural differences, but rather to emphasize the extent to which cultural productions of the era reify those differences through the articulation of sectional identities. At the same time, such expressions argue for their respective section's essential purpose in notions of nationhood. The final two chapters, then, extend those readings to the work of William Apess and David Walker in the context of Indian and African-American emplacement. During a period when a "national spatial imagination" (189) reflected a determination to remove racial difference from within its parameters, Apess and Walker strategically utilize a sectional logic to argue for sovereignty and belonging.

The book concludes with an insightful coda on Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose early expressions of local prejudice remind us of his place as both a revolutionary figure in the American literary tradition, *and* a product of "the sectional consolidation and calcification in the 1820's" (209). Indeed, there is much to admire in Apap's dynamic argument, which is consistently well researched in its focus on expressions of the sectional as a feature tenet of the geographic imagination in Jacksonian America. In particular, the

close readings of lesser-known authors and texts provide the teacher and scholar an opportunity to reconsider the scope and complexities of a sometimes-overlooked period in American literary history.

Steve Bellomy
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BROWN BEAUTY: Color, Sex and Race from the Harlem Renaissance to World War II. By Laila Haidarali. New York: New York University Press. 2018.

In an age in which cosmetic lines such as Fenty and Lancôme are seeking out an expansion of shades catering to black women, modern society seems to be making strides towards the embrace of brown skin. Brown-ness in all its glory has recently crept its way into mainstream America as a viable aspect of the national beauty terrain. This growing acceptance of the broad spectrum of beauty within the black community, specifically of black women, has been a fraught journey throughout American history. From the creation of American slavery to today, black women's appearance has been derided and legislated against; lampooned and constructed as the hideous antipole to white feminine beauty. Historically, all things black reflected the worst of humanity and the human experience. It is this historical reality that makes Laila Haidarali's text—*Brown Beauty: Color, Sex and Race from the Harlem Renaissance to World War II* very compelling.

Nestled between America's post-Reconstruction racial nadir and the rise of the Civil Rights Movement, Haidarali outlines the efforts and complexities of the black community's quest towards aesthetic legitimacy and value. Not yet having entered into the mainstream rhetoric of "Black is Beautiful," academics, authors and advertisers espoused the concept of "Brownness." In Haidarali's words, the text explores "brown beauty as a consumerist discourse that held powerful sway over the public imagining of African American women" (18). Between the 1920s and the end of World War II, the rising black middle class both utilized and was wooed by the more acceptable coding of dark skin through the use of the word "brown" to sell products, find interest in products and to promote themselves as respectable members of society. Haidarali interestingly maps the full scope of the utilization of "brownness" for the furtherance of the black community. Advocates for the betterment of the black community like Elise Johnson McDougald capitalized upon their own fair-skinned brown complexion to promote the skills and employability of black New Yorkers. She also became the first black principal in the New York Public School District thus leading to extensive coverage of her achievement in the New York City press. Stories regarding the rise of McDougald commented as much upon her complexion as her achievement thus leading her to reflect a changing expectation of "New Negro Womanhood." In Haidarali's words, images like McDougald's "appeared to embody the very qualities that were routinely denied to African American women: beauty, educated accomplishment and middle-class status" (53).

As individuals worked to shift popular images of black womanhood, black entrepreneurs also invested the notion of brown for both social uplift and economic gain. Companies like the National Negro Doll Company sold attractive "brown skin" dolls for black girls. Contrasting more commonly found white dolls or unattractive black rag dolls, the NNDC imbued a sense of respectability into its young patronesses through the utilization of the word "brown." The text goes on to explore the "reliance on the verbal language of brown as a racial marker in advertising text"(80). In tandem, black women artists and poets worked to appropriate the word "brown" thus granting it a fuller, more human, meaning complete with self-acceptance and positive sexual undertones. Haidarali canvasses the works of Anita Scott Coleman, Helene Johnson, Angelina Weld Grimke

and others who assert the brownness of black women in truly celebratory tones. During the Harlem Renaissance, Grimke penned, "Brown girl/ You smile/And in your great eyes…I see little bells." In the hands of black women poets, the word "brown" superseded advocacy and advertisements and became a term for black feminine acceptance and joy.

By the end of WWII, the black middle class had fully established the concept of "brownness," as found in printed texts, advertisements and popular literature, as a representation of decades-long efforts towards propriety and respectability. Those able to fully embrace the term and capitalize upon its promises of beauty, mobility and intellectual stimulation within the black community, celebrated the strides gained. Still, the reality of colorism remained present as numbers of darker skinned black people stood left out of the promises of "brownness." Laila Haidarali's history of the notion of "brown" in the African American community between the 1920s and 1940s is fascinating. As so many studies of black beauty revolve around the emergence of the Black is Beautiful Movement, her text articulates the aesthetic notions that visualized black respectability throughout the early 20th century but paved the way for a broader acceptance of the black aesthetic more radically known as blackness.

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RACIAL ECOLOGIES. Edited by Leilani Nishime and Kim D. Hester-Williams. Seattle: University of Washington Press. 2018.

This interdisciplinary essay collection, which developed from a conference staged by the co-editors a few years ago, will interest scholars working at the intersection of race and environmental justice. The collected essays reveal varying quality, with some in need of a more emphatic editorial intervention than provided, but a number of exciting contributions highlight the strengths of this anthology.

Editors Nishime and Hester-Williams want to "show us how communities of color respond to disasters using their own knowledge systems," and to teach us how "marginalized communities contest their compromised environments while envisaging the formation of…just environmental relations" (251) and several of the book's essays stand out as representative examples of these goals.

In a well-written piece on a program that pairs incarcerated individuals with retired thoroughbreds, Erica Tom draws parallels between speciesism and taxonomies of race in an effort to convince readers that what is good for non-human animals is usually good for human animals and that such correspondences can be converted into anti-racist environmental agendas. Indeed, the work she describes has benefits for both horses and humans and more specifically, incarcerated humans of color.

Zoltan Grossman details the way Maori activists have been able to find common ground with powerful whites, who might not otherwise see cooperating interests, through the use of environmentalism as a framing technique. When Maori have been able to convince whites of the environmental significance of their subject positions, they have had success in getting those positions supported, and not really otherwise.

Jessi Quizar provides an informative essay on Black-led urban farming in Detroit, particularly the Feedom Freedom project. Quizar, who worked on this farm, reports that urban agriculturalists in the city frame their work in three ways: "as a means for survival and security; as a route toward reframing what it means to live a fulfilling life; and as a tool for promoting self-determination for Black and poor people" (77). Quizar's essay does well to capture the sometimes contradictory relationship between African Americans and the land. A tree might represent a potential harvest, but in "Black poetry or Black

music, is just as likely—or perhaps more likely—to evoke a lynching as a celebration of a nature" (86). Land distribution and laws about farming always played a crucial role in U.S. slavery and South African apartheid. The author also notes that various algorithmic assessments of property value (e.g. Zillow), automatically deduct from areas of color, resulting in untold lost wealth for such communities.

The editors of this collection, on the strength of the book's more powerful essays, have provided readers with a useful intervention into the American Studies conversation. This volume should be of interest to scholars in several disciplines who want to know more about the wide range of ways people of color worldwide have fought for ecological justice.

Michael Ezra
Sonoma State University

UNSUSTAINABLE EMPIRE: Alternative Histories of Hawaiʻi Statehood. By Dean Itsuji Saranillio. Durham: Duke University Press. 2018.

When thinking of Hawaiʻi, most people imagine beautiful beaches, palm trees, perfect waves—in short, the island state is primarily associated with a paradisiac vacation destination. Yet, when having a closer look, it becomes clear that paradise is lost—at least to its indigenous inhabitants. Mainly whitewashed by the Hawaiian tourism industry, the history of the island state is indeed very dark and tragic. Once a thriving independent kingdom, Hawaiʻi was significantly transformed when first American and later British missionaries arrived on the islands and not only sought to convert the supposedly heathen Kanaka ʻŌiwi (Native Hawaiian) to Christianity, but further started to ban ancient cultural practices such as the hula and surfing. The missionaries were followed by numerous Asian workers as well as Western merchants and entrepreneurs who finally, in 1893, overthrew the Kingdom of Hawaii in a *coup d'état*. Subsequently, the righteous ruler of Hawaiʻi, Queen Liliʻiuokalani was imprisoned in her own palace. Although the queen protested vehemently and President Grover Cleveland later acknowledged in 1894 that the overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom had been unjust, reinstatement never came. It is thus not too surprising that until today, several resistance movements in Hawaiʻi openly question, challenge, and oppose statehood.

Dean Itsuji Saranillio's book *Unsustainable Empire: Alternative Histories of Hawai'i Statehood* closely investigates this so far seldom-discussed part of Hawaiian history by closely examining different narratives concerning Hawaiian statehood, tying it to particular moments of American history. Ranging from an opinion campaign by a descendant of American missionaries in Hawaiʻi at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair to political cartoons and narratives spread by the tourism industry, Saranillio focuses on the almost invisible and unheard perspective of Native Hawaiians as well as other ethnic groups and their opposition to statehood. While American narratives dominantly argue that Hawaiian statehood was timely and necessary for the former independent kingdom, *Unsustainable Empire* convincingly argues that statehood was less an expansion of U.S. democracy and a narrative of Western settlement, but rather a story of both white as well as Asian settlement. Furthermore, Saranillio claims that statehood was "a result of a weakening U.S. nation whose mode of production … was increasingly unsustainable without enacting a more aggressive policy of imperialism (9). He further argues that Hawaiʻi statehood "is understood as a liberal moral allegory about the important inclusion of nonwhite groups into the Unites States," an idea that "came at the expense of Kanaka ʻŌiwi human rights to self-determination" (6). By resurfacing and examining fascinating examples that reveal both Kanaka ʻŌiwi as well as non-Native oppositions against U.S. occupation and by referencing "white supremacy, liberal multiculturalism, settler colonialism, and

imperialism" (13) the book helps to paint a more nuanced and multifarious picture of this complex socio-political issue. Within a framework of transnational and transpacific studies, this approach has been long overdue and much needed, as it does not engage in "a politics of blame and accusation but to open our worlds to a plurality of possibilities" (209) but opens a dialogue for mutual understanding.

Iris-Aya Laemmerhirt
TU Dortmund, Germany

THE VALUE OF HOMELESSNESS: Managing Surplus Life in the United States. By Craig Willse. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 2015.

In *The Value of Homelessness*, Craig Willse brings together interviews with people who work in homeless services organizations in urban centers alongside careful historical tracing and his own experiences in homelessness activism. Through this study, he critically implores researchers in the social sciences to ask different questions about homelessness. Rather than using individuals as endemic of the problem of the unsheltered, he challenges us throughout this book to denaturalize the construction of the housing system and the racial capitalism that undergirds our current neoliberal milieu. He moves through a historicization of homelessness from 1930s New Deal programs to the current moment and argues that there are specific apparatuses that "produce and distribute housing insecurity and deprivation" (22): social science; social service programs; public policy at local, state, and federal levels, and federal governmental arms that are concerned with homelessness, such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Social services and social sciences shape the conversations about and resources allocated for the phenomenon of homelessness—both have been actively involved in creating the definitions that led to current governance around unsheltered populations. This governance directs what he calls "surplus life" through a proliferation of required expertise and economic imperatives. Surplus life is partially managed through a portion of the nonprofit industrial complex specifically focused on homeless services. Willse argues that these organizations work by gaining "financial backing through [a] promise to reduce the negative impact of those neoliberal surplus lives on social and economic order" (49-50). HUD additionally manages surplus life through "the databasing of homelessness" that requires programs to meet very specific requirements to receive funding (109), which then actually prevents the kinds of assistance that would alleviate the conditions of poverty that lead to homelessness. What masquerades as "helping" and "good" for unsheltered people is largely funded by organizations and governments that want the administration and obscurity of the social inequality created as a byproduct of reaping the benefits of racial capitalism.

Through his careful critiques of the ways sociology has specifically theorized and methodologically conceptualized "homelessness," he asks anyone invested in social science to question the "limits of doing good" (177) through research. For example, he talks about the ways that Institutional Review Boards consider "ethical" research—as researchers we are asked to take special consideration of vulnerable populations. Doing this, while undoubtedly important, also has a universalizing effect on principles of protection: people in positions of power have a disproportionate access to shape their own narratives because "mechanisms developed to measure the ethics of research are embedded in the very institutional and governmental complexes we are trying to study" (178). How does one conduct research within an institution when that research's potential is to question the production of inequality by that very institution? Ultimately, he asks academics to think through our complicity in systems that lead to governing marginalized and vulnerable

populations. Questioning the "accepted configurations" (55) that we have of housing and homelessness crises, will enable us to move beyond accepting homelessness and housing insecurity as given, for example. As Willse argues, this could "undermine" rather than "underwrite" (182) the knowledge production that sustains surplus life.

Ashley Mog
Independent Scholar

BARNSTORMING THE PRAIRIES. By Jason Weems. Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press. 2015.

In this thought-provoking and engaging book, Jason Weems analyzes how the aerial view shaped American views of the Midwest and the relationship between Midwesterners and the land during the tumultuous decades of the 1920s and 1930s. Drawing heavily on Joseph Corn's foundational cultural study in the history of aviation, *The Winged Gospel*, Weems deftly interweaves political history, artistic critique, geography, and modernity studies to argue that "the new sight lines actualized by aviation composed a new episteme of vision that enabled Americans to reconceptualize their region amid the shifting culture and technology of the twentieth century" (x). While this new way of viewing offered by the airplane—a shift in perception that Weems encompasses within the term "aeriality"—initiated new ways to reconceptualize the region, Midwesterners were not simply passive recipients to a process imposed upon them from on high. Rather, as the nation seemed inexorably propelled by uncontrollable and nebulous forces in the interwar period, the airplane became a focal point through which Midwesterners actively sought to reconcile the promises of modernity with the Jeffersonian worldview at the center of their identity.

In four thematic chapters, Weems demonstrates how the aerial view transformed a region often derided today as "flyover country" into a primary arena in the debate over what it meant to be American in an increasingly technological age. Chapter One details how the right angles of the grid pattern established under the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the embellished bird's eye view enabled nineteenth century settlers to translate the vastness of the American Plains into a comprehensible and manageable space. Chapter Two focuses on how the Agricultural Adjustment Administration's aerial photographic survey became a central element of New Deal Era attempts to readjust the economic and social patterns of Midwestern life to address environmental degradation. Although federal officials emphasized their expertise and authority to interpret these realistic images of the terrain below, farmers asserted their own agency as they reconciled suggestions to farm "on the curve" with the established grid pattern that had become central to the region's identity. Drawing upon his expertise as an art historian, Weems's analysis of the work of landscape artist Grant Wood in Chapter Three provides a more intimate look at how the aerial view simultaneously sparked a reformulation of modern Midwestern identity and offered new perspectives through which to express it. Chapter Four concentrates on Wisconsin architect Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre project—and its relationship to the urban visions of contemporaries Le Corbusier and Lewis Mumford—to examine how the aerial view stimulated new ideas regarding the relationship between the city and countryside, particularly how to best reconcile the social and economic dynamism of the former with the individual freedom and connection to the natural world embodied in the latter.

Weems's has crafted a cultural history that should speak to a wide audience. In showing the airplane's central role in reconfiguring perceptions of the Midwest in the interwar period, Weems calls our attention to the power of modern technologies to shape the way we see ourselves, society, and the world.

Sean Seyer
The University of Kansas

OUT OF OAKLAND: Black Panther Party Internationalism during the Cold War. By Sean L. Mallory. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2017.

The current trend in Black Power Studies and Black Panther Party scholarship is transnational in scope. Sean L. Malloy's *Out of Oakland* fits neatly with the current trend as it examines the Panther's internationalism during the Cold War. Malloy argues that the evolving ideological internationalism of the Black Panther Party is intersectional, nuanced, and fragmented as it encompasses the international revolutionary proletariat struggle, Third World anticolonialism, and Cold War politics. Overall, the book is a critique of the Panther's alliances and connections abroad, while simultaneously outlining the Party's commitment to transnational revolutionary activism and coalitions that threatened the United States' interest in an evolving Cold War world.

The book contains eight chapters that trace black internationalism and the Panther's transnationalism chronologically from 1955 to about 1981. The book ends with an epilogue that connects the premise to the current #blacklivesmatter movement and its transnational implications and networks. Although strong archival sources utilized consist of US government documents such as FBI files and surveillance reports, US Senate detailed staff reports, and US foreign relations files, most of the primary source material is from the Eldridge Cleaver papers and the *Black Panther* newspaper. The bulk of the book's source material are secondary sources mostly published prior to 2010.

Considering that *Out of Oakland* was published in 2017, a huge omission and major flaw of the book is its lack of engagement with Black Panther Party scholarship, especially more recent works. Most of the links and connections that Malloy makes and even the Panther's rhetoric utilized have been examined in previous studies of the BPP. Malloy does not offer a historiography of BPP scholarship to demonstrate directly how and in what ways his book engages, intersects, or diverges from Panther scholarship. In an endnote for the introduction, Malloy states that "the literature on the party is too vast to cite here in its entirety," so he relies heavily on Martin and Bloom's book, *Black Against Empire* instead of engaging with the equally important other works on the Panthers (FN11, p. 258). Moreover, there is very limited engagement with recent works that examine black internationalism, respectfully. For example, award-winning books by Erik McDuffie, Keisha Blaine, and Ashley Farmer, all published post 2010, are indispensable works that must serve as a guide for Malloy's interrogation of black internationalism and both the BPP and Black Power's internationalist ideas.

Despite the lack of engagement with the aforementioned scholarship, *Out of Oakland* adeptly traverses Panther internationalism during the Cold War. The author's prose enhances his arguments by employing vivid and detailed descriptions that bind to the sources. The book is very well written and supported by the facts presented regardless of the flaws outlined above. Although Malloy makes heavy use of secondary sources, he sufficiently incorporates archival, oral interviews, and newspaper sources to help diversify references. Moreover, the book's rich history greatly improves our understanding of the Panthers participation and influence in the global arena during the Cold War and will undoubtedly serve as a testament to the historiography on black internationalism and black-led grassroots transnational political and social struggles in the world today.

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Notes on Contributors

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Justin Rogers-Cooper is a professor of English at LaGuardia Community College (CUNY) and a faculty member in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program at the CUNY Graduate Center. His publications address the intersection of labor history, literary studies, and racial capitalism in the long nineteenth century

A native of Columbia, Kentucky, **Brad Stone** received his Ph.D. from the University of Memphis and specializes in continental philosophy on the works of French and German philosophers. He is Professor of Philosophy and past chair of the Department of African American Studies.