

Reviews

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803217047

Stephen V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861–1865* (1995). Reprint. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002, \$39.95). Pp. 309. ISBN 0 8078 4795 X.

Joseph P. Ferrie, *Yankeys Now: Immigrants in the Antebellum United States, 1840–1860* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, \$55.00). Pp. 223. ISBN 0 19 510934 1.

Aside from the references to “yankees” in their titles, these two books might appear to have little in common. One is a detailed statistical analysis of the impact of immigration on America, and the impact of America on immigrants, in the antebellum era; the other a study of the impact of Union troops on the South during the Civil War. Both, however, albeit in very different ways, are concerned with two linked themes: the effect that outsiders have on a society, and the memory of that intrusion that develops over time.

Ferrie’s study is a quite remarkable exploration of antebellum immigration. Using a wealth of data on both some, 2,400 British, German and Irish immigrants who arrived in the 1840s together with census information, gleaned from the 1850 and 1860 censuses, on 4,000 native-born Americans, he forces a reappraisal of two main assumptions: first, that immigrants themselves endured harsh conditions on their arrival in America, and spent miserable lives in the fast-developing slums of the eastern seaboard cities and, second, that their impact on the labour market was a negative one, hastening the demise of craft labour and the apprenticeship system. The book arose, he tells us, out of his “dissatisfaction with the quality of data available to assess the economic mobility of Americans – particularly the mobility of immigrants – in the nineteenth century.” His title derives from a letter sent back to England in 1872 by one immigrant couple, Joseph and Rebecca Hartley, who had arrived in America in 1858. The couple expressed their desire to remain in the United States. “I dont think we Could live in England know,” they wrote. “We are yankeys now. England is the place if you have plenty of money but America is the place for a poor man to get a home.”

By no means all the immigrants that Ferrie examines felt so positive about America, but many more of them did so, he shows, than the conventional image of the immigrant experience suggests. In the case of Irish immigrants, in particular, Ferrie notes, the common perception is that they “clung to the cities of the North-east, either too poor to escape the ports where they landed or too discouraged by their previous experience with agriculture to want to move back into farming.” In fact, he shows, the reality is “less clear-cut than this.” The political backlash against

immigrants that culminated in the brief success of the Know-Nothings in the 1850s has skewed our perception of how immigrants fared. Many of the Irish, in common with British and German migrants, experienced high rates of mobility, both geographic and economic, in the two decades before the Civil War. In part, Ferrie notes, the confusion arises because the immigrant experience has not been measured alongside native-born economic progress in the same period. By looking at both sides of the equation, Ferrie concludes that there was "greater distress among skilled native-born workers in northeastern cities, but little apparent negative impact elsewhere." He reminds us, too, that even the Know-Nothings never sought to restrict immigration, but only lengthen the time between arrival and naturalisation. They recognised, he argues, that "with immigration's negative effects limited to one occupation group ... in urban places in one region, it was difficult to make the case for restriction to a nation that otherwise derived significant benefits from immigration."

The full extent to which immigrants benefited the nation would soon become apparent in the Civil War. The South had never held as much appeal for immigrants as the North and West, and the North's ability to draw on its larger population, and particularly its newest arrivals, during the Civil War, whilst not always popular, was a significant factor in its eventual victory. Doubtless a great many of Ferrie's immigrants found themselves fighting in and eventually occupying the South between 1861 and 1865, Ash's study explores the reaction they encountered in a region unused to intrusion of any sort, and certainly ill-prepared for invasion.

Ash's study – now deservedly republished in paperback – first appeared in 1995, alongside Mark Grimsley's *The Hard Hand of War: Union Military Policy toward Southern Civilians, 1861–1865*. Together, they examined the full impact that "the hard hand of war" had on the South. Grimsley, by focusing on military policy, argued that an initially lenient policy toward southern civilians, based on the premise that the South's "silent majority" had been coerced into secession by an aristocratic minority, gradually gave way to a much harsher form of warfare, exemplified by Sherman's march through Georgia and the Carolina's and his promise to thereby "make Georgia howl." Although Grimsley identified a fairly lengthy period between 1862 and 1864 during which Union commanders were more concerned with the battlefield than with the southern home front, he argued that Union troops adopted a hard-war policy much earlier in the conflict. Ash's study reinforces this point. Indeed, his subtitle really says it all.

Ash, like Grimsley, argues that the Union's policy toward the South evolved over time from a "conciliatory and conservative" one to "a punitive and radical one that brought destruction, disruption, and suffering to the occupied South." He also reinforces Grimsley's point regarding northern troops by showing that this shift occurred sooner rather than later in the conflict, identifying 1862 as the crucial turning point in that particular direction. Although the initial reaction of many Southerners was to flee in the face of the approaching Union army, many more stayed behind. They did so for a variety of reasons, but in part, Ash argues, it was because they recognised that "Yankees were not really as beastly as they were cracked up to be." And, at first, their confidence was not misplaced. "The horde of vandals and cut-throats many Southerners had expected," Ash shows, "generally turned out to be a rather reserved and well-disciplined body of soldiers." Further, Union army officials "set out earnestly to win over the errant Southern people" via a "rosewater" policy

of leniency and suasion." In 1862, however, all this was to change. Battlefield setbacks for the Union, combined with the growing realisation that secessionist sympathies were both deeper and more widespread than had been believed, led to a harsher attitude toward a populace that many Northerners now realised could never be won over but had to be both "subjugated" and "revolutionized."

The bulk of Ash's study concentrates on the post-1862 period, and explores the very different effects of occupation on three distinct areas of the South: the garrisoned towns, the Confederate frontier, and what he terms "no-man's land." There were, he argues, essentially "three occupied Souths, each with its own story." All three, however, experienced a marked deterioration in conditions as the war progressed, the death toll mounted, slaves seized the opportunity for freedom and the economy collapsed. Foreshadowing Gary Gallagher's recent argument in *The Confederate War* (1999), Ash nevertheless identifies the persistence of Confederate morale, a persistence based on unwavering "faith in eventual military victory." Of course, that victory never came. Instead, the three linked themes that Ash identifies as central to the southern occupation experience – "violation, pollution, and degradation" – came to define both the actual experience of the conflict and, perhaps even more significantly as recent studies such as David Blight's *Race and Reunion* (2001) have shown, the memories of it.

University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

S.-M. GRANT

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803227043

Jack M. Balkin (ed.), *What Brown v. Board of Education Should Have Said: The Nation's Top Legal Experts Rewrite America's Landmark Civil Rights Decision* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001, \$29.95). Pp. 257. ISBN 0 8147 9889 6.

This book presents the results of a panel of the American Association of Law Schools in 2000, in which nine leading law professors rewrote the Supreme Court's *Brown* school desegregation decision of May 1954. The aim was not to devise a miraculous ruling that might have ensured compliance but rather "to rethink the meaning of America's constitutional commitment to equality in our own time." The contributors were restricted to utilising information available in 1954, but the concept is ahistorical since they wrote their opinions influenced by America's failure during the subsequent fifty years to achieve quality state education for all children regardless of race and class. Consequently, the book is of limited use to historians, except for sketching the *Brown* decision's background and rationale.

The *Brown* ruling maintained that enforced racial segregation in state schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment. A year later, in *Brown II*, the Supreme Court ruled that school desegregation should proceed "with all deliberate speed" but at a pace to be decided by federal district courts. There followed years of defiance, delay and evasion by southern states and localities, which produced token school desegregation. Only in the late 1960s and early 1970s did the Supreme Court act to attempt meaningful school desegregation by demanding the creation of a unitary school system and allowing busing of children to achieve racial balance in public

schools. By the mid-1970s, a more conservative Court exempted the largely white suburbs from busing children into predominantly African American inner cities. Since the 1980s, American schools have experienced substantial de facto resegregation, with black (and Latino) children disproportionately confined to inferior schools.

Eight of the nine professors essentially support the *Brown* ruling. However, they divide between those who argue that it rejects the use of racial classifications, and by implication measures such as affirmative action, and those who regard the ruling as intending to achieve equal educational opportunity, including, by implication, remedial action. Derrick Bell, the lone dissenter from *Brown* and the only scholar here who worked as an NAACP and government lawyer to implement school desegregation, argues that the Court's emphasis should have been on forcing the South to fund truly equal black and white schools, with the result that financial necessity, rather than ineffective judicial action, would have secured the dismantling of dual schooling. Such counterfactual history highlights the disappointing failure of *Brown* for many African Americans.

University of Derby

MARK NEWMAN

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S002187580323704X

Martin A. Berger, *Man Made: Thomas Eakins and the Construction of Gilded Age Manhood* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2000, £30.00 cloth, £12.50 paper). Pp. 167. ISBN 0 520 22208 3, 0 520 22209 1.

Berger's account of Eakins' painting, and the troubled discourses of masculinity from which it arose, is strongly and clearly argued. This book, therefore, provides a fascinating reading of Eakins' work that – at its best moments – clarifies and enhances Eakins' position as the foremost American portraitist of the late-Nineteenth Century. Many of the analyses of the paintings are subtle and persuasive, ones that convincingly take us back to small details on the canvases as means of illuminating larger concerns such as race, gender, economics and politics that, Berger argues, were the contested terrain of Victorian masculinity. A fascinating example of this is the discussion of *The Biglin Brothers Racing* (1872), and *The Biglin Brothers Turning the Stake-Boat* (1873) paintings that depict the famous champion rowers. According to Berger, these are paintings that “draw attention to the apparently contradictory efforts of the rowers [in order to] illustrate rarely articulated ideological oppositions in nineteenth-century manhood.” Indeed, such analytic elegance is matched by the book itself which is handsomely produced with over forty illustrative figures and eight full-colour plates.

The book falls into three sections that enable Berger to develop and examine further the ideological oppositions of Victorian masculinity. The first section focuses on Eakins' depictions of athletes and sportsmen, the second on his depictions of intellectuals and artists, and the third on his use of the male nude from the 1880s on. What binds the book together is Berger's assertion that Eakins' painting provided him with a means of compensating for his own masculinity that – measured against nineteenth-century norms – he felt to be lacking. Such formulations (and there are

many throughout the book) certainly help push its examination of the relationship between Eakins' work and the culture from which it was produced. At times, though, they seem rather too neat, and the leap from the discussion of Eakins' canvases to a discussion of the wider ideological frame a little contrived, or speculative. For the most part, these moments occur in readings of canvases depicting homely, familial, scenes – *The Dancing Lesson*, *Portrait of Mary Arthur*, and *Home Scene* – and therefore demonstrate, perhaps, the inadequacy of the “cult of domesticity” model that Berger invokes but never fully questions. At these moments Berger's deconstructions of the discourses of race and gender within which Eakins was working feel rather too imposed upon, rather than drawn out of, the paintings themselves.

Despite these reservations I read this book with great enjoyment and fascination. It undoubtedly enriches debate about Eakins, nineteenth-century aesthetics, and Victorian attitudes to masculinity in America. The compelling power of its close-readings of the paintings lends them a renewed vitality and interest. The book fully justifies its insistence that Eakins's paintings “demonstrate identity as conflicted” in nineteenth-century America.

University of Glasgow

NICK SELBY

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803247046

Berman, Ronald, *Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and the Twenties* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001, n.p.). Pp. 176. ISBN 0 8137 1057 6.

Ronald Berman dilates the work of two canonical modern writers by expounding upon the intellectual issues and cultural climate of the 1920s. He wishes to demonstrate that these authors' swam in the pool of contemporary thought to a far greater degree than has been acknowledged in the existing criticism, that their fictions reveal two men well up on the new ideas and intellectual developments. The study is comprised of nine essays, which Professor Berman himself describes, too self-effacingly, as loosely interrelated by this general history-of-ideas approach. The ideas he breaks into three main categories of exploration: “dogma, both religious and secular, the new and old ideas of selfhood; and, especially in the case of Hemingway, the way we understand, explain, and transmit experience.” Berman declares that Fitzgerald's and Hemingway's “fiction connected to [contemporary ideas], as it usually does, not through the structures of philosophical form but through intuitions and allusions carried by the winds of doctrine. Fitzgerald and Hemingway read many books, and they were alert to intellectual currents, especially to the contradictions of ideas and ideologies.”

This statement is consistent with the book's main method, which, roughly put, has little to do with “influence studies” and rather more with New Historicism. A typical essay will spend a great deal of time laying out certain aspects of the intellectual climate before these ideas are brought to bear upon the fictions: in some cases half the essay or more will pass before attention is focused on the work of Fitzgerald or Hemingway, which will likely occasion a certain amount of impatience in some readers. One finds Berman authoritative in summaries of the

Anglo-American intellectual milieu of the modernist period; he commands a wide range of pertinent texts and deploys apt quotation after apt quotation. He draws upon philosophers, public intellectuals, and belletrists alike: William James, Whitehead, Dewey, Santayana, Wells, Mencken, Brooks, Wilson, Wittgenstein, Eliot (in all his guises: critic, poet, erstwhile philosopher), even on the relatively more forgotten figure of Walter Lippman. The intellectual context that is limned in the course of the several essays is predominantly sad and negative: disintegration and drift are key metaphors.

Cogent as the discussion of intellectual history may be, the more intriguing portion of each piece is usually to be found when the literary texts are opened up to new readings, which Berman manages to make stimulating and fresh. He has not lost sight of aesthetic concerns in his pursuit of the cultural context for the works, a weakness one often finds in New Historical studies of the thesis-grinding sort. This general method as well as the cast of intellectual characters will be familiar to those who have read Berman's previous studies of Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby and Modern Times* (1994) and *The Great Gatsby and Fitzgerald's World of Ideas* (1997). These works have earned Berman the reputation as one of our foremost Fitzgerald critics, and they demonstrated his ability to turn his expertise in intellectual history to energetic lit-crit account. It is no small feat to formulate enlivening remarks on such a well-worked-over novel as *Gatsby*. Along these lines, it is the Hemingway essays in the present volume which must stake the claim to breaking the most new ground. His examination of "The Killers" in light of vaudevillian techniques and values (one refuses to write the phrase *Vaudeville theory*), while clever in places, shows the potential for pratfall with the heavily contextual approach. The amount of intellectual baggage laid on the story amounts to overkill and the reading eventually proves to be strained and repetitious. On the other hand, "Protestant, Catholic, Jew: *The Sun Also Rises*" takes up the familiar question of anti-Semitism in a deep and considered fashion. Here the initial engagement of Wells and Belloc on the question of anti-Semitism is proportionate and plausible, and Berman draws sagely upon current literary scholarship to help him place Hemingway's first novel decidedly inside the 1920s debate on the religious and ethnic bases of value and style.

Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and the Twenties occasionally overstates its case. One wants to acknowledge the considerable value of exploring the particularities of these writers' engagement with the intellectual issues of their day, but also to declare from time to time that simply because certain intellectual discussions or particular casts of thought are prominent in a given age, they may not necessarily have stimulated the sort of direct responses from writers that Berman imputes to Fitzgerald and Hemingway. The connections proffered may sometimes be more an artifact of the learned critic's lively mind than of the authors' creative processes. That caution acknowledged, it remains to be stated plainly that this is an admirable and lively study that belongs in the library stacks and seminar rooms of our colleges and universities.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803257042

Michael E. Birdwell, *Celluloid Soldiers: Warner Bros.'s Campaign against Nazism* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1999, \$35.00). Pp. 266. ISBN 0 8147 1338 6.

Michael Birdwell's book, *Celluloid Soldiers*, is a fascinating attempt to open up a very different chapter in the history of the Warner Bros. studio in particular and pre-World War Two American filmmaking in general. In a wide-ranging perspective the author brings to a head the vehement rivalry between isolationists and interventionists in Hollywood and wider American society. As America proceeded towards its ominous destiny at Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Birdwell argues that Warner Bros., above all other studios, committed itself to an anti-fascist stance far earlier than anyone else in the film community. "It is sadly ironic that only Warner Bros. recognised what Nazism meant for the fate of Judaism," he says, referring to the majority of studios – with the exception of Fox – that were owned by Jewish immigrants. More than that, Birdwell contends that the man behind this ideological position for the studio was not Jack Warner, the flamboyant dynamo of the operation, but the older patriarchal brother, Harry, "the company's conscience" as Birdwell puts it.

The book proceeds to explain Warners' campaign against Nazism through a detailed reading of three of the studio's late thirties films. *Black Legion* (1937) was the story of the eponymously titled organisation that grew out of the revised Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s. *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* (1939) was Warners' attempt to demonise Hitler and the Nazis for the first time on film. Jack Warner's memoirs recorded how the leading Nazis had first seen *Confessions*, at Berchtesgaden, and how it had infuriated Hitler so much, he immediately placed Warner Bros. on his extermination list. The final film, however, is the one that Birdwell's book concentrates the most on, and the one he sees as crucial to converting American opinion away from appeasement before the Japanese attack. *Sergeant York* (1940), starring Gary Cooper, told the tale of America's legendary World War One hero. A backwoods Tennessean, Alvin York did not believe in fighting yet won medals for gallantry, returning home from the trenches of Europe a decorated hero. York's inter-war battle to get Americans to accept the threat of fascism, and especially his confrontation with that other stalwart American hero of the time, Charles Lindbergh, is the main highlight of the book.

Birdwell's access to York's papers, and interviews he has conducted with the York family, provide a rich complexity to history's conventional view of a very simple man. The tale is not only of someone torn between his beliefs and the prophetic realisation of Hitler's demonic ambitions, however, but also of a character suspicious about the immediate culture of celebrity that a film biography would bring. Producer Jesse Lasky toiled long and hard to get York to accept Warners' vision of his life and the signing of Cooper was an important incentive, Birdwell suggests.

And yet the fascination of this story really lies in the untold fragments that remain at the end of the book. York's political allegiance is oddly vague in Birdwell's hands. Only in conclusion does he declare York a Wilsonian Democrat, and even this stance seems to suggest contradictions with what has gone before. Although York appeared to have had sympathy for Roosevelt's New Deal, many of his other values

were stock-conservative. York's post-Pearl Harbor life is also frustratingly glossed over. The fact that he was penniless by the turn of the sixties is virtually a postscript on the final page of the text. Even Warners' reaction to *Sergeant York* being critically and commercially acclaimed, and then falling prey to the investigations of Senators Gerald Nye and Bennett Champ Clark in Congress in the summer of 1941, is given relatively short shrift. The two-page postscript to the book is by any generous turn rather tacked on. It is no more than a minor shopping list of post-war films that have featured the Nazis.

All in all Birdwell provides an unsatisfying end to a potentially definitive book on this period of the Warner Bros. studio. As he says in the final chapter, "Jewish moguls [as a result of American entry into the war] now found the government wooing them for their cooperation in the war effort, and as a result Hollywood and Washington entered into a formal business partnership that would forever change the film industry." The problem is that we never get an inkling of what that relationship might become, or indeed how Warners' actions in the thirties convinced those on Capitol Hill that it was a partnership worth pursuing. Yet, despite the fact that there is a story to conclude here about the growing marriage between Hollywood and Washington, *Celluloid Soldiers* is still a valuable addition to research on studio politics in the 1930s. It also provides a neat overall summary of some of the Warners' most important films of the period and is thus recommended for these features alone.

University of Manchester

IAN SCOTT

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803267049

Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001, £23.95). Pp. 368. ISBN 0 674 00597 X.

Mark Ellis (2001) and Neil Wynn (1976) have shown what an impact World Wars I and II had on American race relations. Mary Dudziak's study (2000) shows that the Cold War similarly had an effect. Now, Cornell University's Thomas Borstelmann enters the discussion reinforcing this point, and suggests that the reverse also took place: American race relations had an impact on the Cold War. He traces the rise of American racism as a potent Soviet propaganda theme, the spin put on the issue by American government counter-propaganda, President Truman's use of foreign embarrassment as leverage to achieve progress at home, Eisenhower's more reluctant response to Little Rock and other fiascos out of fear of Communist advances abroad, Kennedy's diplomatic dilemmas with emergent African nations at a time of racial confrontations at home, and what he describes as the eclipse of the racial dimension of foreign policy as the result of civil rights advances under Johnson and the simultaneous distraction of the Vietnam War.

The Cold War and the Color Line has an ambitious breadth, but its focus is on the two Deep Souths, America's and Africa below the Zambezi. Borstelmann examines the problems in the two regions, the similarities and interactions between them, and the responses to them by foreign policy makers in the USA. His evidence on racists'

international awareness is illuminating, for example the dictum of Alabama's former governor Frank Dixon on the Nazis: "The Huns have wrecked the theory of the master race."

The State Department's files on Indian and African responses to US racial problems do contain some arresting material. The challenge for Borstelmann and others is to show that it had an impact on the American policymakers. By his own account, US leaders remained unreconstructed. Eisenhower was a proxy Confederate, Foster Dulles a latter-day spokesman for the South Carolina slaveowners from whom he was descended, Kennedy a mere calculator. To State Department "wise men" George Ball and William Bundy, Third World nations had "names like typographical errors" and Arabs were "rug merchants." One could argue that all this undermines our author's case. Perhaps international opinion was a factor behind Washington's responses to Little Rock and Selma, but it is an uphill struggle to argue that Little Rock and Selma encouraged official American opposition to apartheid. However, Borstelmann's characters were pragmatists. It may well be that their actions were more enlightened than their personal prejudices. By suggesting this, Borstelmann has posed a provocative question for future generations of historians.

University of Edinburgh

RHODRI JEFFREYS-JONES

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803277045

Maria do Céu Pinto, *Political Islam and the United States: A Study of U.S. Policy towards Islamist Movements in the Middle East* (Reading: Ithaca, 1999, £35.00). Pp. 340. ISBN 0 86372 245 8.

Issues surrounding Islam and the West have particular resonance and need to be considered with sensitivity since the horrifying attacks of 11 September. In the United States, Maria do Céu Pinto suggests, Islam is conceived of as a disruptive threat that is antipathetic to the liberalism and democracy that is personified by Western nations. According to the view publicised in general in the American media and in US political debate: "Islamism has come to be seen as a disruptive force that threatens friendly Arab regimes, has a strong anti-Western bias, is anti-democratic and the main source of subversive and terrorist activity." In a similar vein to the "Red Threat" of the USSR and global communism that once held sway in the United States, made palpable in the blood of the killing fields of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Korea, a new fear has germinated in American consciousness over the last forty years that has grown into a perception of the violence and extremism posed by the "Green Menace" of Islam.

The view of the fundamentalism and intransigence of Islamic political movements, termed the confrontational approach, translates directly into aggressive foreign policies taken towards Islamic groups. More recently, this has led to war in Afghanistan, conflict in Palestine and Israel as well as the possible extension of military activity in Iraq, which many such as Said suggest is little more than American imperialism, a sort of Gulf War II: The Final Justice.

Alleged to be hostile to the civilising influences of democratic elections, the free market and secularism, Maria do Céu Pinto suggests that a political monologue is

established towards the whole of Islam that is reflected in US foreign policy. Peculiarly, both American and Islamic ideologies describe one another as monolithic, static and deaf to social change. The central policy of the US, throughout the conflicts portrayed in the book and the inexorable growth in the popularity of Islamic political groups, seems to be one of restriction and containment. Ironically, this is counter-productive, in so far as lack of dialogue assists conservative forces and the maintenance of the status quo in Islamic as well as Western countries.

An alternative approach, termed the accommodationist school, is suggested by Maria do Céu Pinto as a possible solution: "It is premised on the assumption that the Islamic revival encompasses a variety of movements, that Islam is compatible with democracy and that Islamic moderates, with whom the West can cooperate, do exist." Indeed, this argument is a central premise that works as a key for exploration of the tensions between the US and a variety of Islamic interest groups. In this way, Islam is seen as a multidimensional phenomenon that is contextualised by region and socio-economic circumstances, rather than as a monolithic or dangerous entity.

From an American perspective on the level of a "world state," as admitted by the author in introduction, Maria do Céu Pinto tends to avoid domestic sources such as specific primary evidence from the American media, peace deals aided by the Clinton administration, the voices of refugees and asylum seekers from Islamic nations, and inequalities of gender and class in Islamic social and political life. Human rights violations, gender exploitation and events since 11 September are not dealt with in this book. Instead, the text focuses very thoroughly on the US government's involvement in foreign affairs in terms of the attitudes and policies taken towards radical Islam before the horrifying attack of 11 September.

Wivenhoe, Essex

BENJAMIN T. GRAY

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803287041

Heather Cox Richardson, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865–1901* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2001, £27.50). Pp. 312. ISBN 0 674 00637 2.

Heather Cox Richardson's new book compels us to rethink the ending of Reconstruction. Building on the work of historians like David Montgomery, Eric Foner and Michael Les Benedict, she demonstrates that, in their abandonment of Reconstruction, Northerners were not so much yielding to an innate and ineluctable racism as working through their anxieties about social tensions in industrial America.

According to Richardson, most Northerners, especially northern Republicans, interpreted the issues of Reconstruction within the framework of their own free labour ideology. Emancipated slaves were expected to step into the role of "stereotypical workers," labouring to better themselves and to redeem the South from its economic and social backwardness. The congressional policies of Reconstruction were primarily designed to protect this nascent free labour system. By the early 1870s, however, "mainstream Northerners" had begun to reinterpret the behaviour of freed African Americans in the light of the growing evidence of class conflict and industrial unrest in their own society. Freedmen seeking political office,

demanding access to land, or acting militantly in defence of their rights were now cast in the guise of “disaffected laborers” who, like the northern workers who believed in labour organisation and class conflict, had abandoned self-reliant toil in favour of political agitation. Richardson explains how the condition of South Carolina under Republican rule, the campaign to pass Charles Sumner’s civil rights bill, and the controversy over the force bill of 1890 were all interpreted in such terms. It was because of this perception of freedpeople as disaffected proletarians who “wanted to dominate and subvert the government” that “mainstream Northerners” acquiesced so readily in the overthrow of Reconstruction regimes in the South.

The Death of Reconstruction draws on an extensive reading of the major metropolitan newspapers and magazines. Richardson recognises the difficulty of inferring movements in public opinion from such sources but believes that through them she can access the sentiments of a set of key opinion formers, including conservative Republicans and some Democrats, whom she variously categorises as the “better classes” and “mainstream” Northerners. However, to identify the self-styled “better classes” with the “mainstream” is surely to privilege one interpretation of reality, however influential, over a wide range of alternative views. If we were to take another measure of opinion, namely the behaviour of elected representatives in Congress, we would find that a majority of Republicans, at least up to 1890, supported the objectives of Reconstruction.

While it is true that free labour theories guided Northerners in their approach to the freedmen, as all who have examined the records of agencies like the Freedmen’s Bureau will attest, most of their advice and instruction was predicated on the assumption that, for the foreseeable future, the freedpeople’s role would be as agricultural labourers cultivating the South’s plantation staples and that the destiny of African Americans, apart from a few fortunate individuals, would be different from that of white labourers. Richardson performs an interesting and valuable thought-experiment by bracketing race in her analysis of Reconstruction. Yet, revealing though the exercise is, it shows that racial concepts cannot be easily disentangled from ideas about class and that racial assumptions were rarely absent from northern thinking about the freedmen.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth

ROBERT HARRISON

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803297048

Lidia Curti, *Female Stories/Female Bodies: Narrative, Identity and Representation* (London: Macmillan, 1998, £42.50 cloth, £13.99 paper). Pp. 232. ISBN 0 333 47164 4, 0 333 47165 2.

This book is both confused and confusing. It darts around across a huge range of narrative texts and barely digested theoretical positions in an increasingly thwarted attempt to articulate a unifying theory for “the spaces and the times that narrative occupies in women’s lives.” It is never clear *which* women’s lives it describes. Such a slippage between specifics (and the particular political struggles these may evidence in women’s lives across the globe) and the ideological, or at least, theoretical

generalisations that such specifics are supposed to support continually disables the book's project. Interesting and important as this project may be, Curti's book fails to provide any convincing examination of her chosen texts. Indeed, the book's genesis as a series of discrete essays is everywhere apparent as it lumbers between analyses of modern and contemporary British, American and post-colonial novels, television and film, and even a chapter on female melancholia in *Hamlet*. At this level the book is ill-advised and ill-conceived, but at the level of its theoretical underpinning it is disastrous. Its opening "position" chapter is, in fact, a bombarding of the reader with half-digested summaries of postmodern feminist theory. I simply cannot take seriously a book that, in four short paragraphs (less than one page), sees Monique Wittig, Luce Irigaray, Gayatri Spivak, Teresa de Lauretis and Julia Kristeva as all equally providing a critique of "the dualities of Western logocentrism." The gestures here are too coercive, too all-inclusive to be convincing.

This is true, also, of the textual analyses throughout the book, which all tend towards plot-summary rather than the sort of rigorous deconstructions one might expect. Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, we are informed, details "a complex network of female ties tying one generation to another." This is as trite a summary of Morrison's text as one will ever encounter. In the discussion of soap opera in chapter 3, too, the adoption of an all-embracing model of "female ties" means that any real and important generational, national and cultural differences between soap operas is expunged: are we seriously to believe that women's "desires," "pleasures" and "needs" are always the same, the world over, when watching *Dallas*, *Crossroads*, or *Neighbours*? A final example will suffice to demonstrate the inadequacies of this book. In a potentially fascinating examination of Jane Bowles's role in both William S. Burroughs' *Naked Lunch* and David Cronenberg's film of the novel, Curti quotes Burroughs: "'In Cuernavaco or was it Taxco? Jane meets a pimp trombone player and disappears in a cloud of tea smoke ... A year later in Tangier I heard she was dead'". This, she claims, is evidence of Burroughs' misogyny, by writing of her death before she had actually died. Yet again, this book misses the point. Undoubtedly, Burroughs' misogyny is apparent throughout all his writing, it is just that here is definitely not one of those moments. What Curti omits from this quotation is the crucial sentence, "The pimp is one of these vibration and dietary artists – which is a means he degrades the female sex by forcing his chicks to swallow all this shit." Burroughs' depiction of Jane, here, is surprisingly *un*-misogynistic, tender even, discovering something of women's oppression at the hands of manipulative men. Here, as throughout this book, Curti misrepresents her sources by making them fit a preordained (but cumbersome) theoretical model. It is deeply unconvincing.

University of Glasgow

NICK SELBY

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803307042

Justin D. Edwards, *Exotic Journeys: Exploring the Erotics of U.S. Travel Literature, 1840–1930* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2001, \$60.00). Pp. 288. ISBN 1 58465 116 4.

Edward Said's ground-breaking *Orientalism* (1978) introduced the notion that not only the Orient itself but also all foreign unknowns have been apprehended through

discursive strategies such as exoticisation and reification, contingent upon a colonialist position of Western superiority. His thesis has extensively influenced subsequent travel-writing criticism, including this study. Justin Edwards seeks to demonstrate that the American branch of this genre – in which he includes the conventional travel narrative, the hybrid travel text and touristic fiction – represents “difference” in exotic and erotic (including homosexual) terms, while at the same time implementing the tropes of imperialist rhetoric. Edwards reinforces his argument with a wide range of historical and theoretical references, but attention devoted to this kind of material (much of which is very familiar by now) tends to dissipate the focus on the specific texts under discussion. Each of his three sections could indeed constitute a discrete study: the real “exotic” in representations of the South Pacific by Melville, Charles Stoddard and Jack London; responses to Europe by Hawthorne, William Wells Brown and Edith Wharton; and black and white authored explorations of New York City in novels by Djuna Barnes, Carl van Vechten and Claude McKay. In attempting to apply this central idea to such literary diversity, Edwards sometimes strains its applicability, though many individual analyses are interesting and illuminating.

The question of the national specificity of the selected texts remains doubtful, too. Edward’s identification of a national tradition of travel writing, linked to a period of American expansionism, is debatable, even though in his Conclusion he somewhat belatedly qualifies this: “implying that the erotic discourses found in American travel literature do not exist in other national literatures ... would be misleading.” His reading of Hawthorne’s uneasy attitude towards Rome, in both the *French and Italian Notebooks* and *The Marble Faun*, as American prudishness and fear of moral corruption, for example, is countered by his contextualising discussion of eighteenth-century European discourses of the Grand Tour which point up the city as a site of seductive eroticism and which, he claims, influenced Hawthorne’s writing. Conversely, he does not suggest that Hawthorne’s American Puritan heritage is at least partly responsible for his distrust of Italian carnivalesque “primitivism”; nor – though he mentions Hawthorne’s condemnation of her open engagement with Roman sexuality – does he note that Margaret Fuller is generally taken to be a possible model for Miriam in *The Marble Faun*. Similarly, in showing how Edith Wharton imported “Western [i.e. European] discourses about other North African countries,” Edwards fails to indicate how her American vision of the harem in *In Morocco* differs from that of many British women commentators on Oriental society. Overall, this is a potentially valuable and well-researched study, but Edwards rides his thesis too hard and too exhaustively. It is often repetitive and would benefit from a narrowing of focus and sharper concentration on specific generic examples.

University of Sheffield

SHIRLEY FOSTER

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803317049

M. Gulia Fabi, *Passing and the Rise of the African American Novel* (University of Illinois Press, 2001, \$32.50). Pp. 187. ISBN 025 2026675.

Gulia Fabi’s sophisticated re-reading of nineteenth-century African American novels is an attempt to redress the consistent neglect of a body of work which she

considers fundamental to the understanding of this literary tradition. The authors Fabi includes in her analyses have often been disparaged as lacking in artistic skills, catering to white conceptions of superiority, insecure in or unhappy with their own racial categorization; in a word hankering to be "white." Fabi, however, probes well beneath this facile surface, combining New Historicism with African American feminist critique to locate each of these novels firmly within the socio-historical context in which they were written and published. The result is an often fascinating reevaluation of the texts and authors on their own terms, rather than in comparison with an aesthetic which clearly corresponds to another age. Her most unifying motif is the trope of passing, employed by early authors as a subtle but persistent mode of probing the tenuous, often treacherous, color-line that divided the "races" during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

With "Subversive Mulattas and Mulattos" the book is launched with a sympathetic reappraisal of William Wells Brown's three versions of *Clotel*, attributing the modifications in the novel not to the author's struggle to achieve artistic coherence, but to the changes both in Well's life, as the author moves from England to the United States, and in the dates of publication, a reflection of the dramatic changes in the fortunes of African Americans from antebellum to post-Civil War years. I can think of no better example of the effects of mediation on black writing than this first chapter; both students new to the field and specialists have much to learn from this type of evaluation which argues that, contrary to the general critical consensus, Wells was wholly conscious of his artistic aims and attempted to craft his novel to fit the times and his reading public.

The emphasis on the characters who pass in *Clotel* and later in Frank J. Webb's *The Garies and Their Friends*, raises expectations that the trope will be used to apply to "almost-white" characters who pass into the "white" race looking either for freedom or for other gain. That is, a form of black "trickery" from which the passer reaps some benefit. (And Fabi effectively points out that the trope is strikingly different from the "tragic mulatta" of white-authored literature and as such the two strains "constitute profoundly different literary traditions.") Rather unexpectedly, and unapologetically, chapter 2, "Race Travel in Turn-of-the-Century African American Utopian Fiction," modifies the terms of the argument. The two episodes that involve passing in *Imperium en Imperio* actually concern a black man masquerading as a domestic worker in order to "analyze the unprotected status of the black woman" and this same character's dismay on finding that his wife gives birth to a son who "looks white" (but will later darken). And, while Fabi's analysis of *Iola Leroy* as a utopian text is thoroughly convincing, does the fact that the protagonist, who is brought up to be white and only discovers her "race" on the death of her father, willingly chooses to identify herself as "black" in order to dedicate her life to the "uplifting of the shadows," qualify her as a "passer"? Moreover, Edward A. Johnson's *Light Ahead for the Negro* is included because it constitutes a case for "generic passing." "Race travel" is indeed an expression that more aptly reflects the concerns of this chapter than the traditional use of the passing motif.

As a devoted fan of Charles Chesnutt's I was easily enticed by the author's close reading of his *The House Behind the Cedars* in chapter 4, and its comparison with Chesnutt's previous attempts at the "same" story in "Rena Walden" and *Mandy Oxendine*. Locating the texts within Chesnutt's struggle for acceptance by the

publishing world, and signaling the intertextual calls to works which would have been quite familiar to his contemporary reading public, Fabi provides a fresh approach which has much to add to the ongoing debate about Chesnutt's supposed "preference" for mulattos, fictional or otherwise.

Moving into the early twentieth century, James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* is shown to be pivotal in the development of the passing motif as it turns the century, and at the same time serves to validate Fabi's stance that the passing motif was a basic component in an ongoing subversive critique of the status quo. Contending that the confusion generated as to the veracity of the story was a product of much the same type of misreading as had occurred with the earlier texts, Fabi reviews the novel's publishing history, and its "mistaken identity" as an autobiography (another instance of "generic passing"). Yet full appreciation of the irony in this novel can only come from reading *The Autobiography* "against the previous literary tradition of committed novels of passing." Moreover, in Fabi's words, "*The Autobiography* ... proves to be a precursor not only of the themes and concerns but also of the tensions and omissions that characterized the New Negro movement." Johnson, then, becomes the crucial "missing link" in what some critics have thus far contended was a rather "disjointed" tradition for African American literature.

Chapter 5 could conceivably stand alone, though it effectively constitutes the *raison d'être* for the four previous chapters. Thoroughly researched, the chapter is an exhaustive work of twentieth century critical archeology in which Fabi examines (mostly) male critics' stubborn refusal to look seriously at nineteenth-century novels of passing on their own terms. The approach is once again New Historicist in that the author very much locates each critic within his (fewer times, her) historical context. Though perhaps less engrossing than the analyses of the early fiction, it nevertheless provides a perceptive evaluation of the evolution of African American criticism and its tortuous search for a definition of itself. Sparks do fly, however, when this review starts to take issue with positions held all too often by the current powers-that-be in African American studies in the United States. Perhaps only an "outsider" (neither American, nor black) could venture such a sharp critique, immeasurably valuable for the insights and alternative viewpoints it provides.

It is an unfortunate quirk of chronology that Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s edition of Hanna Crafts' *The Bondswoman's Tale* has been published just after *Passing and the Rise of the African American Novel*, for here indeed is a novel that lends itself readily to Fabi's thesis with its inclusion of various "passers" (at times in both race and gender) and is, of itself, a rich study in "generic passing" (or "textual amalgamation"). Nevertheless, Fabi's study will be instrumental for a greater appreciation of Craft's controversial "novel" for the tropes of passing, miscegenation, "tres-passing," and the instability of *genre* all seem to come to bear on the novel as we and the author herself struggle with the definition of "race" and the implications of the early African American literary response to it.

For her part, Fabi's book is an essential contribution to students of this literary tradition, and an excellent example of the strategies necessary for reading texts published in the nineteenth century.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803327045

Martin Folly, *The United States and World War II: The Awakening Giant* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002, £14.99). Pp. 187. ISBN 0 7486 1526 1.

Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, commander of the Japanese attack on the American Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, stated upon hearing of the successful attack, "I'm afraid we have awakened a sleeping giant and filled it with terrible resolve." This study, as its subtitle suggests, charts the course of this giant's awakening. Folly's examination is not, however, merely a discussion of the American decision to enter World War II after Pearl Harbor. This short, practical survey of the events leading to American entry and ultimate triumph in World War II provides an excellent introduction to this chapter of history in all of its aspects. Beyond the standard areas of society, politics and economics it also considers diplomatic, military, strategic and personal factors. It even takes into account the unique influence of the Rooseveltian style of government.

The Second World War would be a watershed in American History. Millions of Americans engaged in the effort to stop Nazi and Japanese aggression, and the conflict became a turning point in their lives. The war also shaped international relations and had tremendous domestic ramifications. In the wake of the Depression, the years 1941–45 offered abundant opportunities for many people. This survey aims to describe the strategy, tactics and operations of the "arsenal for democracy" and the Allies in pursuing the war in Europe and the Pacific. It assesses the influence of the war on the community of nations and the international balance of power. This volume includes consideration of the wartime relations between the Allies, the disagreements, accords and the issues they failed to resolve. It also has a domestic awareness, examining the effects of the war on domestic institutions, the economy, and politics. It considers particularly the impact of the war on civil rights, race relations and social change. The narrative style highlights thematic links and explains important terms such as "isolationism."

This volume's particular usefulness lies in its discussion of historiographical issues surrounding the United States and World War II. It deals with important issues of deliberation or contention such as the role of the economy and intervention versus non-intervention. However, despite excellent explanation, the historians responsible for such theses or arguments are often not clear. Although many of these authors are included in the bibliography or short notes sections at the end of chapters, in my opinion, it would have been improved to include a little more information either during the course of the chapter or in the notes sections at the end of each chapter. This would enable interested students to access material more easily without overwhelming the narrative. This book includes a very useful chronology. The "Select Bibliography," through breakdown into sections of interest, is rendered even more helpful and effective. The inclusion of a list of websites is a valuable idea. All in all this is a first-rate introduction to the study of the United States and World War II.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803337041

Jürgen Heideking, Genevieve Fabre and Kai Dresbach (eds.), *Celebrating Ethnicity and Nation: American Festive Culture from the Revolution to the Early 20th Century* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2001, £47.00 cloth, £17.00 paper). Pp. 308. ISBN 1 57181 237 7, 1 57181 243 1.

Whilst much of this book was based on a number of papers given at European Association of American Studies conferences held over the course of 1998, its publication in 2001 could not have been more timely. For, in the studies of emerging American nationalism through deliberately created festivals, celebrations, pageants and processions, there is a clear foreshadowing of contemporary American responses to threats upon national security and identity. However, this collection of essays looks beyond an examination of identity at a national level, and studies how local, regional, ethnic and religious diversity feed into a greater sense of shared nationhood. This variety is reflected in the approach of the text itself, based on “an interdisciplinary approach, combining the perspective of historians and literary European scholars on a topic of increasing academic interest in the United States” (“Editor’s Preface”). The interdisciplinary nature of the text allows readers less acquainted with the early history of the United States to engage more fully with what could otherwise have been a decidedly daunting addition to the ever-increasing field of American studies.

The book would appear to fall into three key sections: early definitions of nation in the face of international opposition, definitions of ethnic and religious identity in the face national opposition/division and how these two combine in an attempt to form a coherent sense of nationalism by the opening years of the twentieth century. Jürgen Heideking, in his chapter “Celebrating the Constitution,” highlights the three main purposes of early American ratification celebrations as “effective propaganda ploys,” reflecting “hope for an improvement in the economic situation under the new Constitution” and revealing “a desire for national unity ... with the opportunity to forge a stronger sense of common American identity.” Genevieve Fabre, in the chapter “Performing Freedom,” argues that Negro election celebrations in the New England of 1740–1850 were “ceremonial performances and civic occurrences that conjured a community into existence.” Udo J. Hebel’s “Historical Bonding with an Expiring Heritage” explores early attempts to confirm American national identity through a shared historical past, in this case the Plymouth Tercentenary festivities in 1920/21. However, caught “in the middle between Randolph Bourne’s claim to a ‘trans-national America’ of 1916 and Alain Locke’s call for ‘a new democracy in American culture’ and ‘a new American attitude’ of 1925,” the Plymouth Tercentenary appears somehow between reactionary and lacklustre in terms of authenticating a shared national identity.

Whilst France has a long academic tradition of studying festivals as part of, and contributing to, their social, historical and political heritage dating back to the late nineteenth century, this is still very much in its infancy in the field of American studies. This book should prove an invaluable (perhaps even vital) contribution to that emerging field for both existing and future scholars.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803347048

Theodore Hamm, *Rebel and a Cause: Caryl Chessman and the Politics of the Death Penalty in Postwar California, 1948–1974* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2001, £45 cloth, £10.74 paper). Pp. 209. ISBN 0 520 22427 2, 0 520 22428 0.

In a gesture that typifies his exhaustive researches through journalistic, political and legal archives, Theodore Hamm quotes here from a San Francisco newspaper column of May 1960: “The Man, Caryl Chessman, is no longer the issue.” Such displacement or decentring of the specific detail of Chessman’s case indeed affords Hamm a model for his own study. He is relatively uninterested in the still vexed question of the prisoner’s guilt or innocence with respect to the “Red Light Bandit” crimes with which he was charged; instead, Chessman becomes, in this account, a kind of polysemic object, a point of intersection of multiple ideological, political, sexual and even literary discourses traversing the United States in general and California in particular during almost three post-war decades. Such centrifugal method is not without risks: for instance, Hamm passes rather too quickly, and without benefit of any feminist perspective, over the sexual brutalisation of Chessman’s two alleged victims. Yet the compensation is that he shows in fascinating detail this case’s promiscuous narratability, its openness to being read as a text favouring, among other discursive positions, liberal penology, right-wing backlash, sexual hysteria or Mailer’s hipsterism.

Nevertheless, some rhetorical inflation undoubtedly occurs as Hamm tries to focus all social struggles and realignments of this period through the prism of Chessman: “From the trial in 1948 to execution twelve years later, the Chessman controversy thus generated impassioned debate over not merely the fate of one man, but instead the sexual behaviour of all men and women in the aftermath of World War II.” *All* men and women? Indeed, the relative sealing-off of Chessman’s case from questions of race leads Hamm, towards the end of his study, to turn increasingly to another protracted death row campaign – that of the African American Wesley Robert Wells – as a way of better dramatising racial injustice in America’s post-war penal system and the consequent crisis of the liberal rehabilitative paradigm. If Hamm himself favours one particular interpretation of the significance of Chessman over the many competing narratives, it is precisely this story of the collapse of liberalism. Yet, even as the book properly exposes the blind spots of such an optimistic, managerial philosophy, it also has the effect of bestowing a nostalgic lustre upon the penal culture of the 1950s and 60s when this is set against the present reactionary penal deposition of the US, endorsed by Democrats and Republicans alike.

Loughborough University

ANDREW DIX

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803357044

Charlie Keil, *Early American Cinema in Transition: Story, Style and Filmmaking, 1907–1913* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2001, \$60.00). Pp. 320. ISBN 0 299 17360 7.

Charlie Keil's important study of the period in American cinema between the years 1907 and 1913 offers a much-needed response to the question of how fiction became the dominant form of cinema in the twentieth century. Working with this period as a transitional moment between the "cinema of attractions" and the multi-reel fiction film, Keil utilises detailed and wide-ranging research into the production practices of the major film companies. He places this in the context of industry development (technological, organisational and economic) and trade press discourse to depict a period in which filmmakers were trying out different techniques to intelligibly express increasingly complex narratives cinematically. One of the most important aspects of this study is the depth that it lends to a period which has been previously dominated by studies of D. W. Griffith and Biograph (Tom Gunning), the French company Pathé (Richard Able), the Vitagraph company (Roberta Pearson and William Urrichio) and Edwin S. Porter's work at Edison (Charles Musser).

Keil's method is the product of the historical poetics associated with David Bordwell. Briefly this approach attempts to determine the range of aesthetic choices available to filmmakers, the results of which emerge as "norms" within a particular historical moment. By fashioning the boundaries of his study in terms of the question facing filmmakers at the time, i.e. how to make broadly intelligible narrative films for a paying audience, Keil analyses "how a problem-solving process produces a set of changing formal properties." His approach is convincing not so much as a totalising or antagonistic response to studies which privilege broader cultural and ideological determinants, but as a platform for such work.

The book treats the transitional period within the specific boundaries of trade press advice and critique of films of the period and an impressively comprehensive range of films. Through detailed analysis Keil is able to illustrate the different solutions filmmakers arrived at in terms of constructions of narrative time and space and chart the development of adopted and discarded stylistic procedures. What emerges here is a picture of a period where a dialogue exists not only between the trade press and the filmmakers but also between filmmakers within different companies as the house style of each shifts and changes. Keil sets out the framework of this dialogue through sketching out the competitive atmosphere between film companies as they attempted to establish brand recognition at a time of increasing standardisation. The nascent trade press establishes its own identity by engaging with and overseeing the drive for narrative legibility. Following this analysis of industry and trade dialogue he organises his study along the formal categories of narrative structure, construction of space and time, editing and *mise en scène*. He provides a detailed picture of the development and adoption of classical narrative devices while placing these in the context of devices which were discarded or short-lived along the way.

The reliance on formal, text-based analysis does leave some questions concerning the influence of other forms of entertainment culture such as theatre and vaudeville. Griffith's theatrical and literary influences are well known and such a detailed consideration of his contemporaries implies similar antecedents. For example, the

prevalence of moral polarities in the dramatic films is an overarching factor in providing morally legible character motivations. Further, the inexorable move toward the seamless quality of classical narration was, as Keil recognises, driven in part by ideologically loaded phenomena such as the differing notions of realism, evident in his examination of the trade press, or the restrictions imposed by official and unofficial regulating bodies. Keil's careful and convincing justification for underplaying these lies in the presentation of his work as a grounding into which the "dangling cause" of culture can be reintroduced. However there does seem to be some scope for recognition of the impact these factors had on the aesthetic choices available to filmmakers at the time.

For the non-specialist reader, the lack of access to the actual films from this period may be frustrating. In fact this is a problem that accompanies the study and teaching of early cinema generally. Keil's study would clearly benefit from a wider availability of these early texts. Thankfully there is detailed filmography that indicates the archive where each film is held. This will certainly enhance future work in this area. These qualifications aside, Keil's work will stand as an important contribution to early cinema scholarship. This excellent study of the transitional period, which takes into account the work of filmmakers other than D. W. Griffith or the Biograph, Vitagraph and Edison companies, will be useful to scholars and student alike.

University of Southampton

MICHAEL HAMMOND

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803367040

Dean J. Kotlowski, *Nixon's Civil Rights: Politics, Principle, and Policy* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 2001, £23.95). Pp. 404. ISBN 0 674 00623 2.

In recent years, Richard Nixon's biographers have underscored his constructive contribution to civil rights. Based on solid research in private and public papers, and memoirs, Dean Kotlowski presents a full-length study of Nixon and African American civil rights that also emphasises the positive, and includes useful chapters on Native Americans and women. Kotlowski argues that "The Nixon administration implemented affirmative action and set-aside programs for minority-owned companies," "desegregated southern schools and reformed Native American policy." However, Nixon's attempt to court southern whites has tended to obscure his achievements.

According to Kotlowski, Nixon's civil rights policies reflected a mixture of political expediency, practicality and principle. The desire to attract white Southerners led Nixon to attempt in vain to slow down school desegregation and, again unsuccessfully, to eliminate the preclearance section of the Voting Rights Act. Limited by a Democratic-controlled Congress and a Republican Party divided between moderates and conservatives, Nixon's civil rights policy frequently moved according to the political winds. Committed to creating opportunity for upward mobility and to returning power to the states and local communities, Nixon supported minority business creation and affirmative action, but he opposed forced integration outside the workplace and accepted voluntary separatism. Personally unconvinced of the

abilities of minority groups and women, Nixon nevertheless supported opening up business and professional opportunities for their more gifted members.

Kotlowski pays helpful attention to Nixon's pre-presidential approach to civil rights, and makes brief comparisons between Nixon's presidential policies and those of his next four successors. Throughout his public life, Nixon had considerable sympathy for racial equality under the law, which as president was reflected in deeds, rather than in his racially divisive rhetoric. From the perspective of the 1990s and the new century, Nixon's civil rights policies look far less conservative than they did at the time.

Concerned to stress Nixon's contribution to civil rights, Kotlowski tends to de-emphasise the negative. It was the Supreme Court that accounted for a massive increase in school desegregation during the Nixon administration. Kotlowski mentions Nixon's attempt to appoint Clement F. Haynsworth, Jr., and G. Harrold Carswell, both conservative white southerners, to the Supreme Court only briefly, and he ignores the impact of the president's successful conservative appointments. Although he emphasises Nixon's principles, Kotlowski frequently has to concede what the weight of his own evidence demonstrates. It was pragmatism and opportunism that dominated Nixon's policy making.

University of Derby

MARK NEWMAN

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803377047

Arnold Krupat, *Red Matters: Native American Studies* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002, \$47.50). Pp. 167. ISBN 0 8122 1803 5.

Krupat's latest volume follows a pattern familiar to readers who know his work; a judicious mixture of critical theory and literary criticism. The mix is as rich and various as ever. If anything, as its subtitle indicates, the range is extended to engage in more cultural analysis than previously. Throughout we find him speaking with authority and with the acquired wisdom that accompanies his extensive ability to overview and command the field. The book is divided into five essays. The first continues his endeavours to define critical positions within the field of Native American literary studies; the third and fifth offer contextualised critiques of two novels: Mourning Dove's *Cogewea* and Sherman Alexie's *Indian Killer* respectively; and the third marks a new development in his thinking, as he struggles to fully empathise with tribal views of history.

This leaves the second, which is a reprint of his 1992 essay "On the Translation of Native American Song and Story." Krupat's justification for its inclusion rests on the critical categories developed in his first chapter: namely the nationalist, the indigenous and the cosmopolitan perspectives. Thus he attaches a prefatory paragraph in which he argues that acts of "anti-imperialist" translation inevitably involve a meeting of the "indigenist whose knowledge can relativize and even destabilize the knowledges that support imperialism" with the cosmopolitan critic. His discussion of translation of Native American traditional songs and stories hinges on the paradigm of similarity and difference – the terms he actually uses are "*like*" and "*unlike*" (his emphases). The essay was worth reprinting, it offers an excellent overview of the

state of translation of traditional Indian literatures and works to the, some might say, inevitable conclusion that the best translations are those that manage to negotiate skilfully the difference between oral, performative literatures and Western writerly textual practices, i.e. those that combine reliable linguist knowledge and discernment with an unerring ability to deploy modern and contemporary prosodical procedures and a good feel for appropriate poetic diction. And yet one senses an opportunity missed here.

The rest of the volume is more critically subtle than this; it has moved beyond the stark binaries of “unlike” and “like” to engage with a more complex cultural landscape. It offers informed expositions of the histories and social contexts of differing perspectives, sketching an intellectual map of intersecting, often triangulating, forces. Thus Sherman Alexie’s “red” rage and its relation to American Indian militancy is compared with the protest fiction of Wright and Baldwin and its relation to the Black Power movement. But the novel is also contextualised in terms of a literary tradition in which “rougeist” rage has been depicted but treated in different ways from Alexie’s postmodern textual violence. At the same time Alexie’s early childhood in an activist environment is touched upon. Eschewing simplification, his explication draws on multiple facets of culture, history, literary history, identity politics and militant activism. Similarly the discussion of *Cogewia* attends as much to its political, legal and intellectual contexts as to straightforward textual analysis. Yet Krupat’s critical sensibility operates with a light touch to indicate the unevenness of that novel, and to suggest convincingly that its passages of elevated “literary” language are the result of Mourning Dove’s intrusive collaborator, McWhorter. In this essay Krupat offers a brief history of treaties and legal definitions of sovereignty, a contextualisation of Charles Eastman’s autobiography in comparison to DuBois, and an informed account of contemporary identity politics, including the divergence between Alexie’s and Owen’s positions. This is so much richer and more allusive in style than the chapter on translation, which offers an informative account of translation history and a critical assessment of a desirable contemporary practice. But little more than that.

I sense that another and as yet not fully written essay haunts this volume. An essay that would develop the ideas that Krupat presented in a recent conference paper at the Aberystwyth conference on Ethnicities. Surely what this volume needs to complete it is an account of the work of *contemporary* American Indian poets. Rather than reprint a discussion of the work of translators of traditional texts, the contingent intellectual impetus signals the need to engage with those poets who “translate” the complexity of cultures and languages that they exist in today. Krupat’s genius lies in his ability to both see the larger picture and to understand the local details. Let us hope that if he himself does not develop this further discussion of contemporary American Indian poets, his work will inspire a younger critic to attend to “anti-imperialist” translation in the work of contemporary poets such as Ortiz, Rose, Hogan and Harjo.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803387043

Stefan Kühl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, £16.99). Pp. 184. ISBN 0 19 514978 5.

The Nazi Connection is a sobering and thoroughly documented history of the links between the Nazi eugenic programme and American eugenic science and legislation. Kühl uncovers a complex and extensive relationship between American and German eugenicists, beginning in the early decades of the twentieth century and extending to American assistance in rehabilitating Nazi scientists into the international community following 1945. In doing so he provides a valuable contribution to a transnationalist understanding of ideologies of racial hygiene during the period, and a severe indictment of the complicity of many American scientists and eugenic activists in supporting Nazi laws on compulsory sterilisation, marriage and involuntary euthanasia, often long after their racist and totalitarian nature had become obvious.

Kühl's book, which won the Fraenkel Prize for Contemporary History, traces several factors in this transnational relationship. American eugenic science was important ideologically to National Socialism; Kühl records an anecdote of how the white supremacist popularises Madison Grant had boasted of a letter he received from Adolf Hitler, which referred to Grant's 1916 book *The Passing of the Great Race* as his "bible." It was important legislatively: the Nazis' 1933 law on Preventing Hereditarily Ill Progeny was modelled on Californian sterilisation law and data, and also on a "model" sterilisation law drawn up by Harry Laughlin, assistant director of the Eugenics Record Office and later recipient of an honorary degree from the University of Hiedelberg in 1936. American support was also important for the Nazis' propaganda initiatives, allowing them both to respond to international criticism of their eugenic measures and to present German racial hygiene to the German people as a model admired in other powerful nations.

Crucially, the book also details continuities between American eugenic groups with close links to the Nazi programme in the thirties and the contemporary Pioneer Fund, a body which has extensively funded recent controversial research into links between race and intelligence. Kühl's study does not give extensive contextual information on the historical background or the social implications of the American and the Nazi eugenic programmes, but this information is available in such studies as Daniel Kelves' *In the Name of Eugenics* or Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann's *The Racial State: Germany 1933–1945*. A narrow but important study of the institutional, ideological and personal connections between the eugenic programmes of the two nations, *The Nazi Connection* is the most detailed book available on this disturbing chapter in American–German relations.

University of Exeter

MARK WHALAN

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S002187580339704X

Jonathan E. Lewis, *Spy Capitalism: Itek and the CIA* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002). Pp. 329. ISBN 0 300 09192 3.

Despite the widespread use of Eisenhower's catch-phrase the "military industrial complex" the number of books exploring those links has remained comparatively small. Jonathan E. Lewis's new volume rectifies that situation specifically in the area of spy satellites. *Spy Capitalism* traces the development of that technology from the mid-fifties through to the mid-sixties. Lewis himself is well placed to write such a study because he has experience both as a business executive and a member of the intelligence community. This experience no doubt helped him to gain access to company records and also to key personnel from that period including former CIA agents. The result is an account packed with detail on meetings, public and secret, which gives a unique sense of the tortuous negotiations over mergers and defence contracts.

Itek was the corporation formed in 1957 to implement the top-secret Project CORONA, namely to design and put into orbit spy satellites over the Soviet Union. The idea for such satellites dated back to 1946 and high-altitude filming had been used to monitor the Operation Crossroads nuclear tests in the South Pacific, but it was the shock of Sputnik which gave the immediate impetus to the new project. Although Lewis somewhat modestly describes his book as a "management study," it is far more than that and gives, among other things, more insights into the space race between the super-powers. The 1957 Rockefeller Report on the state of the US Army was particularly damning on their under-use of science, and Eisenhower quickly approved the replacement of the then state-of-the-art U-2 high altitude spy planes by satellites. To fool the Soviets, soon after the project was agreed its "cancellation" was announced, just one instance of the elaborate cover behind which this research was conducted. Itek began its commercial activities by taking over a number of companies like Photostat which were important either for their related technology, their scientific personnel, or the location of their sites. From a purely business point of view one of Itek's problems was its rapid growth and expansion, a problem compounded by their use of a matrix organisation instead of a top-down managerial hierarchy. Presumably another problem was secrecy. Lewis documents the bizarre situation of Itek going public on the stock exchange and attracting a lot of investment even though no-one really knew what the corporation was producing.

Itek's success was one of the pivotal moments of the Cold War. Once the CORONA satellite showed how many military airfields and missile sites the Soviet Union possessed, a certain kind of secrecy was gone for ever. Without hyperbole Lewis states: "The U-2 had pierced the Iron Curtain; CORONA tore it to shreds." These photographs gave the lie to the so-called "missile gap" which featured prominently in the Nixon-Kennedy presidential campaign. Nixon knew the facts but could not authenticate his claims without revealing the technology involved. The CORONA satellite was to play a further important role in giving high resolution photographs to confirm those already held by the US government in the Cuban missile crisis. Partly due to continuing tension between the CIA and the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) the importance of Itek waned after the early 1960s.

Lewis's account is heavily narrative. He concentrates overwhelmingly on the story of Itek, and documents the power struggles which went on within the corporation and with other agencies. He shows the complex involvement of the Rockefeller family in the establishment and promotion of Itek, and reveals how important were personal links between the key personnel. To fill out the context of the events Lewis describes, it would have been interesting to hear whether the Soviets knew of Project CORONA and also to hear whether the launch of Sputnik destroyed the privacy of national air space. Nevertheless *Spy Capitalism* gives us unique account of key developments in the technology of Cold War surveillance.

Liverpool University

DAVID SEED

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803407044

Melani McAlister. *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945–2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, \$50.00 cloth, \$19.95 paper). Pp. 358. ISBN 05202 144 39, 05202 28103.

Melani McAlister's *Epic Encounters* is itself an epic encounter, both with its announced subject and with the larger project of cultural studies. Subtle, skillful, and enormously informative, the book "chronicles how, in the years between World War II and the turn of the twenty-first century, Americans engaged the Middle East, both literally and metaphorically, through its history as a sacred space and its continuing reality as a place of secular political conflict." Though her thinking is informed by various paradigms of revisionist and oppositional history, McAlister avoids simplistic, unidimensional interpretations of the American relation to the Middle East. Instead, she probes the multifaceted bases, ambivalences, and internally conflicted agendas of American culture as it both responds to and internalizes the "reality" of the Middle East. Over the last fifty years, McAlister demonstrates, the Middle East was important for "the racialized and gendered discourse of nationalist expansion." Nonetheless, she insists, "there were ... challenges and alternatives to these nationalist logics."

For example, in her superb interpretation of Cecil B. DeMille's *The Ten Commandments* McAlister shows how the movie does not simply position an adversary Egypt against God's people (whether as Jews or proto-Christians). Rather, the movie imagines America itself as Mosaic savior, coming in against the enemy of European imperialism in order to rescue Third World peoples (like the Egyptians) for democracy and freedom. The movie expresses what McAlister calls the "discourse of 'benevolent supremacy,'" in which "refigured associations of the exodus trope played a part in narrating ideas about the United States' role in the decolonizing world."

In a subsequent chapter, she takes her argument even further, demonstrating how America's rescue mission in relation to Egypt took on decidedly racial implications for American blacks. "Like 'benevolent supremacy,'" she argues, "the logic of [what she calls] imperial stewardship depended on combining universalist rhetoric with a presumption of American and Western superiority so profound that it remained unspoken. The 'official' Tut narrative ... constructed [the artifacts] as 'universal,' something too ennobling and too precious ... to belong to any one

people ... Instead Tut was presented as part of the ‘common heritage of mankind’ – a heritage that would be owned and operated by the United States.” For African Americans such claims concerning universalism threatened to co-opt Egypt for white Western culture. Racializing the subject of the Middle East, American blacks constructed an Egypt that was part and parcel of black Africa, thus relocating the “common heritage of mankind” from white to black history.

McAlister’s book is filled with such fascinating and illuminating insights.

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

EMILY MILLER BUDICK

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803417040

Myra MacPherson, *Long Time Passing – Vietnam and the Haunted Generation* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001, no price on publication). Pp. 695.

ISBN 0 253 34003 9.

It still hasn’t passed – the specter of Vietnam is continuing to haunt America, as the new edition of Myra MacPherson’s *Long Time Passing – Vietnam and the Haunted Generation* makes abundantly clear. Originally published in 1984, with a postscript added in 1993 and now a new introduction written in November 2001, these amendments to the text underline the continuing need to reassess the role that the Vietnam War has played in shaping present-day America, as well as showing the unhealed scars that continue to blemish America’s national consciousness. *Long Time Passing* is concerned with distance and perspective. MacPherson writes that she in some ways “quite simply sat out the war. I felt that Vietnam was benumbing, confusing, deeply troubling.” She acknowledges the strategy of emotional distancing in order to cope with events uncomfortably close to hand, and she hopes in her introduction that the length of time which has elapsed since the war’s events will create “enough distance now” for some of the ghosts of the past to be laid to rest, yet simultaneously will “erase our collective amnesia over the Vietnam war.”

MacPherson’s book grapples with the fact that the nature of distancing is complex, double-edged; even as it grants the perspective to reveal truths which should not remain hidden, it reveals truths that hurt America, particularly its myths of innocence and youth. The truths that MacPherson reveals are the stories of individual perceptions of the war – male and female, black and white, combatant and non-combatant, draft-dodger and protester. *Long Time Passing* consists of an anthralling cacophony of voices, sometimes conflicting, sometimes interlocking, a myriad of subjective perspectives which serve to “illuminate the effect of the war as it was on the generation asked to fight it” and disclose the ultimate paradoxical truth that there is no single truth about Vietnam, that truth is indeed the first casualty of war. The new edition is at pains to make clear that there are lessons to be learned. The new introduction considers the events of 9/11 in comparison to the Vietnam war and its aftermath – “like Vietnam veterans who became sensitised to war, many Americans have now become sensitised to the threat of terrorism.” Vietnam, often thought of as the first “television war” may seem primitive compared to the “round the clock television coverage” that MacPherson says has “made this first terrorist war ubiquitous.” Vietnam’s legacy has shaped foreign policy, the lesson being

"no casualties, no media, and no unwinnable wars." MacPherson believes that a danger of this legacy is seen in American reluctance to get involved in outside affairs.

Ultimately though, MacPherson believes that greatest danger lies in the "legacy of ignorance" which still persists surrounding Vietnam. That this is in no small part due to the fact that there is no single story of Vietnam, she is well aware. *Long Time Passing* does not try to avoid this complexity, or look for an easy moral for readers. Instead, this weighty volume presents readers with the rare opportunity to make sure that these many voices, these many truths of Vietnam, do not go unheard.

University of Glasgow

RACHAEL MCLENNAN

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803427047

Douglas S. Massey, Jorge Durand and Nolan J. Malone, *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Era of Economic Integration* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002, \$29.95). Pp. 199. ISBN 0 87154 589 6.

Over the last two decades American politicians have fuelled public fears of a social and economic crisis caused by the influx of thousands of undocumented Mexican immigrants. This nativist reaction was created by the domestic and international crises that beset the United States between the 1970s and early 1980s. Political leaders encouraged a disillusioned electorate to turn their anger and resentment towards the cheap Mexican labour that supposedly depressed the wages of American workers. The introduction of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994 has substantially increased the economic integration of the United States and Mexico. Nonetheless, there is still intense resistance to the amalgamation of the two countries' labour markets. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 was the first in a series of legislative measures intended to tighten border controls and restrict the flood of illegal Mexican immigration. A policy of "prevention through deterrence" has also resulted in the intense armed patrol of the border.

Yet, according to the authors of this important study, none of these measures actually work. The threat of arrest by border patrol officers has not discouraged undocumented Mexicans from crossing into the United States, but simply led them to take alternative routes through less-monitored areas. This has, in turn, increased the spread of illegal aliens across the United States. The authors allude to the social tensions created in border communities by the sudden "invasion" of migrants en route to other parts of the country. They could, in this regard, have referred to the recent acts of vigilantism by Arizona ranchers who have been associated with the arrest, intimidation and murder of Mexican immigrants.

One of the most compelling arguments put forward by the authors is that armed border enforcement not only fails to deter the flow of migrants into the country but also discourages those who are already there from going home. The traditional pattern of Mexican migration to the United States has been cyclical: immigrants sought to raise sufficient resources before returning to their native country. Far from preventing immigration through a policy of deterrence, the federal government has therefore accelerated the permanent settlement of Mexican migrants.

This book convincingly demonstrates that the restrictive policies pursued by successive administrations since the 1980s have proved a complete and costly failure.

Marshalling an impressive array of data, the authors of *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors* have produced a damning indictment of current border policies that commands the immediate attention of decision-makers.

University of Sussex

CLIVE WEBB

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803437043

Patricia Merivale and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney (eds.), *Detecting Texts: The Metaphysical Detective Story from Poe to Postmodernism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999, \$45.00/£35.00 cloth, \$19.95/£15.50 paper). Pp. 305. ISBN 0 8122 3434 0, 0 8122 1676 8.

"In metaphysical detective fiction," Merivale and Sweeney say in introducing the genre, perhaps referring to the works of Kafka and Borges, "the mystery is a maze without an exit." The metaphysical or anti-detective story, as written in Merivale's and Sweeney's text, raises more questions than it solves mysteries and provides answers. This is true of both the anti-detective novel itself and of Merivale's and Sweeney's self-reflexive exploration of the genre. The clues are all there in the anti-detective novel, presented to the beguiled reader and protagonist alike, but as is often the case the clues are all red-herrings and the butler did not do it. The crime, even if there was any such thing as a transgression committed, is subordinated to the processes of detection and interpretation that occupy both the protagonist and the reader of the novel. Nietzsche, often cited as one of the philosophical forebears of the postmodern condition, might well call this reversal a metonymy: the solving and final answer of a mystery, once the centre and apogee of the text, become less important in comparison to the questions that are raised about narrative, interpretation, the limits and horizons of knowledge, power relationships between authors and readers, subjectively and the nature of reality.

Tracing the origins of the anti-detective novel, perhaps a peculiar task to complete given the context of exploration, analysis begins with Edgar Allan Poe's tales of mystery and imagination. The contributors then go on to look carefully and broadly at more contemporary fiction: including such authors as Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, Jorge Luis Borges, Umberto Eco, Agatha Christie, Georges Perec and Paul Auster. Certainly, the presentation of literature and the assessment of literary theory help to build and expand upon a critical appreciation of the metaphysical genre. The Portrayal of a variety of anti-detective fiction and ways in which theories of literature and language may assist in understanding the subject, to be sure, work as both an introduction to key texts and as an engaging analysis. Merivale's and Sweeney's book is in this sense highly recommended reading, with the proviso that the reader should not be seeking a definitive (and monological) conclusion.

In a self-reflexive position, in fact, Merivale and Sweeney forsake a conclusion. This is both philosophically open – as with the metaphysical detective genre itself – and somewhat of a let down to an otherwise fascinating collection of essays. Issues that could be raised in conclusion might perhaps entertain philosophies that are antagonistic to the metaphysics of the genre: for example, Derrida's view of the "auto-affection" of the transcendental; the problem of reflexivity becoming little

more than relativism; the polemic among more traditional approaches that the postmodern condition is akin to the investigations of a dog in pursuit of its own tail; the alienation that the metaphysical genre may cause in its audience, so that readers may in their enlightened ignorance put the anti-detective novel down in search of something less puzzling and esoteric; and Wittgenstein's and Hannah Pitkin's remedy to "conceptual puzzlement" (in which metaphysical language "goes on holiday" so that no conclusions may be reached) that suggests that only propositional language may be used and metaphysics passed over with a respectful silence. Despite this, Merivale's and Sweeney's assessment and exercise of the practices of writing and reading offer an insightful exploration and a sketched map of the streets, avenues and pathways that may be taken in a city of words.

South Bank University

BENJAMIN T. GRAY

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S002187580344704X

David Morgan, *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998, £3.95). Pp. 265. ISBN 0 520 21932 5.

Visual Piety is a tour de force of scholarly interpretation which ranks with Robert Orsi's *Thank You, St. Jude*, and Leigh Schmidt's *Consumer Rites* as one of the most provocative interdisciplinary works on religion in the United States in recent years. Morgan, trained as an art historian, set himself the task of explaining the perennial appeal of what sophisticated Christians (or non-Christians, for that matter) have usually characterized as kitsch: Warner Sallman's *Head of Christ*, perhaps the most familiar attempt to portray Jesus in the past century. Morgan, who has already edited an exhibition catalogue and a collection of essays on the subject, utilizes as data not simply the Sallman painting and a number of related images, but also the several hundred responses from people of a wide variety of ages and religious backgrounds sent as a response to an advertisement the author placed in a number of popular devotional journals. Thus provided with an ample data base, Morgan proceeds to interpret his archetypal popular religious image from a wide variety of angles. Art history, not surprisingly, is one of these angles, and Morgan goes back several centuries into the history of portraiture of Jesus from the Middle Ages to the recent past by way of positing a collective image that has come to exist in the mind's eyes of most Christians as to what Jesus presumably looked like, even in the absence of the slightest historical material or verbal evidence for this knowledge. He then proceeds to tackle devotional theology, demonstrating persuasively how American Protestant piety was transformed from a spirituality of empathy – in the case of Jonathan Edwards and his Catholic predecessors – to one based instead on sympathy. In a nutshell, this means that believers related to Jesus no longer by attempting to imitate his life and sufferings but rather by regarding him as an intercessor whom they could befriend – “What a Friend We have in Jesus” – and upon whom they could rely. The Jesus of Sallman is, not surprisingly, one based primarily on the latter sort of spirituality widely labeled today as sentimental (a word Morgan eschews) Protestantism. Beyond the character of the portrait itself, Morgan goes on to utilize his

interview data to fashion an elaborate account of the reception of the image by relating how hundreds of respondents have actually experienced its presence. Morgan utilizes a wide variety of theoretical approaches here, much of which might broadly be described as phenomenological, and aims at demonstrating how Sallman's portrait, in its millions or reproductions, has been made a constitutive part of the experiential worlds of its admirers. This account is buttressed by ritual theory, illuminating the Head of Christ's role in rites of passage, and well as social history, which contextualizes the changes in American family life in which this sort of image can function as both reminder and agent of family solidarity. Morgan performs this intricate task with grace (if the reader overlooks a few somewhat opaque theoretical passages); learning (the notes and bibliography are worth a great deal in themselves); and continual insight.

This is a must read for students of the histories of religion, art, and material culture in the United States.

Miami University

PETER W. WILLIAMS

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803457046

Michael Oriard, *King Football. Sport & Spectacle in the Golden Age of Radio & Newsreels, Movies & Magazines, the Weekly & the Daily Press* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001, \$39.95). Pp. 419. ISBN 0 8078 2650 2.

This excellent book should be required reading on any American Studies course worth the name. Football has been and continues to be a register of the American experience. From the Preface, with its First World War poster illustration of boys playing football, padded and throwing the ball, mutating into young warriors, gas-masked and throwing grenades, to the Epilogue's consideration of the way the game has been televised, Michael Oriard's detailed and well-written work shows us how the game has been constructed through notions of national, gendered and ethnic – and, as he insists, also class – identities. Using pulp fiction, news reporting and magazine-cover images as parts of his narrative (and not just as referenced “evidence”), Oriard demonstrates and engages with the ways through which the game was woven into all aspects of American culture.

Football started at Ivy League institutions which bought into the Victorian ethic of team sports and manliness but were not happy with the implicit Britishness of Rugby football, and until the 1940s the college game was far more important than the professional. It received wide local and national press and broadcast coverage; movies were made, and stories were written about it; huge stadia were built (and regularly filled) on campuses which increasingly marketed themselves as centres of football excellence.

There is a story about American values here (including the vast contribution made by education and desire for education to the American Dream) which needs more detailed teasing out than Oriard has time for, but he does unpack the way in which, at all levels and throughout the game's history, it was continually being opened up and made more inclusive. The early Ivy League assumptions about team sports and

the Anglo-Saxon character were overthrown thanks to the success of colleges such as Notre Dame, quickly called the “fighting Irish,” though in fact their sides also contained Poles, Italians and other Catholics. By playing the American game, these second-generation men confirmed their own, and their ethnic groups’, American identity; by doing so they contributed to the making of a more inclusive (though damagingly racist) ideology of “caucasian” whiteness. Though the book also discusses the ways in which the black press and players represented the game and their place in it, much of the African American impact on the game necessarily lies outside the scope of this book (the “golden age” as Oriard discusses it is pre-1960s, and pre-televisual).

Oriard’s thoughtful and well-illustrated text is predictably as Americacentric as is football itself. There is little reflection here on the exceptionalism of a sport which outside the USA has been far less successful than basketball, baseball and hockey. But perhaps that says it all. American football in a sporting milieu dominated by association football – and FIFA in particular – marks American exceptionalism, and the *lack* of American global cultural hegemony, in this otherwise increasingly globalised world.

King Alfreds College, Winchester

ANDREW BLAKE

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803467042

Patrick Rael, *Black Identity and Black Protest in the Antebellum North* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002, \$55 cloth, \$19.95 paper). Pp. 421. ISBN 0 8078 2638 3, 0 8078 4967 7.

How “African” are African Americans? To what extent has their resistance to oppression in the past been based on a shared sense of cultural distinctiveness? Have American blacks always been in some respects a nation within a nation? As Patrick Rael argues, resistance based on claims to cultural identity is less likely to fall apart than resistance based on the notion of shared suffering because, unlike group membership, suffering is seldom equally shared. This is why modern nation builders have been at pains to stress the notion of “ein volk,” of common blood, of possessing shared attributes regardless of class, occupation, regional origin, or the measure of suffering personally experienced. It is also why latter-day African American populist spokesmen, from Marcus Garvey to Elijah Mohammed, have not hesitated to evoke black racism in response to white racism.

Even so, there were good reasons for antebellum blacks not resorting to such tactics. For one thing, with the establishment of the American Colonization Society in 1817, there was a very real fear that the government might resort to forcible repatriation. To have claimed an affinity with Africa would not only have played into the hands of the colonisationists but would have strengthened the convictions of that far larger body of whites who regarded African Americans as an alien presence. Since the principal aim was to persuade the white majority that they were fellow Americans, and thus entitled to the same rights and privileges as other Americans, claims based on the notion of cultural distinctiveness had to be avoided. Thus “colored” rather than “African” or “Negro” became the preferred usage, the

African Baptist Church of Boston duly becoming the First Independent Church of the People of Color. It was also why blacks were continually urged by their leaders to cultivate good manners, dress neatly, work hard and otherwise conform to the norms of bourgeois respectability, in the expectation that whites would eventually be shamed into accepting them into the American mainstream.

This was not, as Patrick Rael is at pains to emphasise, a form of spineless accommodationism. Those who spoke on behalf of northern blacks genuinely believed in the values they were attempting to inculcate. What was wrong with the ideals of bourgeois culture? After all, there was nothing distinctively white about working conscientiously, being punctual, seeking to improve one's mind, or keeping on the right side of the law. Above all, they believed in the universality of the Enlightenment and Revolutionary principles upon which the American nation was supposedly founded, that is to say on the notion of human equality and the right to life, liberty and happiness. The problem was that these admirable principles were not adhered to by a majority of the white population. For historical and environmental reasons, blacks lacked education and many other advantages possessed by whites. In order to struggle up from the bottom of the pile and thereby gain respect they would have to work particularly hard, but in time, and once slavery had been swept away, they would eventually gain full acceptance.

This is a brilliant but also heartrending book, for it shows that northern black intellectuals grossly underestimated the virulence of white racism. To those who had aspired to better things, the horrors of the half century after emancipation came as a bitter disappointment. Where Rael's account is most revealing, however, is in showing the extent to which issues that have dominated subsequent debate – promoting black pride, influencing the press, maintaining group solidarity, even propagating the Afrocentrist notion that the Greeks derived their civilisation from Ancient Egypt – were among the issues discussed by the black intellectuals of the antebellum years. The book thus covers much more than its title would suggest. Anyone looking for an introduction to the subtleties of black thinking on the subject of race and group identity could hardly do better than start here.

University of East Anglia

HOWARD TEMPERLEY

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803477049

Benjamin Reiss, *The Showman and the Slave; Race, Death, and Memory in Barnum's America* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2001, £20.50). Pp. 267. ISBN 0 674 00636 4.

P. T. Barnum's first exhibit was Joice Heth, an African American woman, slave or ex-slave, billed as "The Greatest Natural & National Curiosity" "Nurse to ... George Washington," aged "161 years," whom or whose rights to show he acquired in mid-1835. Heth's act, a freak show, included a display of religiosity and of memories of Washington. She died early in 1836, and became the object of a public autopsy, another Barnum exhibit and topic of controversy. Heth was thereafter remembered, in differing accounts, mainly in Barnum's known or now presumed autobiographical writings, ever a profound if fleeting episode in his life.

There could hardly be a better summary of *The Showman and the Slave* than the Introduction's final paragraph:

By looking in detail at the strange career of Joice Heth, this book will examine the marks left by slavery on the culture of the modernizing North and, by implication, some of the marks left by that culture on our own. Parts I and II follow Heth's career ... as a living performer [an object of dissection,] and posthumously, as a figure in the writings of Barnum and others. These sections show how the various ways of interpreting Heth – both her body and her act of imposture – constituted for white audiences and readers [of newspapers and other contemporary accounts] ... indirect readings of and fantasies about their own positions in society. Part III [one chapter, the last, of 17 pages] briefly reverses the looking glass by asking how Heth generated her story. How did her ... imposture resonate with the culture of slavery from which it emerged? And how, after eighty years ... as a slave could she have been prepared for her improbable second career as a celebrity in the North? The focus is not on what white audiences made of her, but on what she might have made of them.

Among topics in Reiss's readings of Joice Heth as text and its contexts are automata, india rubber, the Second Great Awakening, the rise of penny newspapers, anti-abolitionist riots, Nat Turner, blackface minstrelsy and even Harriet Jacobs (a long, entirely hypothetical and wholly inessential paragraph about what might have been in a copy of the *New York Herald*). Heth could have been, in less truly empathetic hands, merely a hook on which to hang little disquisitions about many aspects of 1830s America. Reiss is, however, always on her side, even anxious not to be an academic exploiter, e.g. two pages justifying inclusion of three half pages detailing the autopsy anatomically.

We learn too much, often over-simplified and shallow, from a limited range of recent secondary sources, about Barnum's America and too little about Joice Heth herself, despite Reiss's painstaking research. There are no data and the speculative final chapter virtually leaves blank thirty years of Heth's life between her only documented appearance as a slave and her emergence as a grotesque exhibit. The details of performance and exhibition fascinate; the analyses of attraction and repulsion convince; but in the larger theatre of slavery, popular culture and modernisation in the 1830s Joice Heth was a side-show.

Lewes, East Sussex

GEORGE REHIN

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803487045

Lawrence R. Samuel, *Brought to You By: Postwar Television Advertising and the American Dream* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2001, \$50 cloth, \$22.95 paper). Pp. 266. ISBN 029 2777620, 029 2777639.

Though critics regularly assail them for their coarseness, their crudity, and their 30-second-long concentrations of the evils of capitalism, television commercials have nonetheless been as significant and comforting a presence in the psychic landscape of postwar America as the most familiar childhood bedtime stories. Indeed, the cable network TVL and regularly includes repeats of popular commercials from decades past in its schedule of rerun series.

Lawrence Samuels' book *Brought to You By: Postwar Television Advertising and the American Dream* attempts to address the way in which commercials insinuated

themselves into that landscape in the two decades following World War II. Television ads, he argues, used the new medium during the years 1946–64 to help spread an ideology of consumerism among a population that now, after years of privation during the Great Depression and the war, had both money and the willingness to spend it.

Samuels tracks the cultural development of television ads through three stages: first, the early postwar years, in which advertising “sponsors” exerted control over their programs while learning how to sell to their audiences; second, the mid- to late 1950s, when advances in advertising technique were countered by network resistance to sponsor control and viewer resistance following the sponsor-ordered rigging of quiz shows; and, finally, the early 1960s, which saw the triumph of multiple sponsorship and the beginning of the onslaught of demographics, as advertisers began to target the young baby-boom audience.

A well-written book, *Brought to You By* excels in its discussions of the advertisements themselves. Samuels clearly traces the path from the clumsy salesfloor demonstrations of early ads through the use of celebrities in commercials and, frequently, their own television shows, to the use of animation, clever jingles and characters created to appeal to both a younger audience and an audience of greater televisual sophistication.

Strong as it is in description, however, *Brought to You By* is weak in analysis. Though he does not rehash the all-too-familiar arguments against television advertising, Samuels also does not offer anything new. As the catchall “American Dream” term might indicate, the ideology of consumerism is taken as a granted here, rather than explored in its several dimensions. Not until the final chapter of the book, when the author looks at efforts of African Americans to see themselves represented in advertising, is there any acknowledgement that the “American Dream” was different things to different people in the 1950s and 1960s, and with differing degrees of access.

Students of American television will enjoy Samuels’ book for its well-documented consideration of how television advertising developed in the postwar years. For why it worked as it did, however, they will need to search further.

Augustana College

JEFFREY S. MILLER

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803497041

Jon Lewis, *Hollywood v. Hard Core: How the Struggle Over Censorship Saved the Modern Film Industry* (New York: New York University Press, 2000, \$50 cloth, \$18.95 paper). Pp. 377. ISBN 0 814 75142 3, 0 814 75143 1.

An outstanding piece of interdisciplinary scholarship, *Hollywood vs. Hard Core: How the Struggle Over Censorship Saved the Modern Film Industry* takes the familiar narrative of the death and rebirth of the American film industry following the 1948 *U.S. vs. Paramount* antitrust case and recasts it in the light of that industry’s ongoing attention to public concerns over content. Author Jon Lewis, employing perceptive aesthetic commentary, astute economic analysis and thorough legal research, argues persuasively that what is actually seen on screen has far less to do with moral and ethical

issues of censorship than what that content means financially to the studios – and now, conglomerates – who put it there. Lewis traces mainstream Hollywood's effort to recoup its losses following the US Supreme Court's *Paramount* decision and threats that other media – television and Top 40 radio in particular – posed in the 1950s. Ironically, the *Paramount* decision itself proved to be key in that effort, as the ruling made free speech a part of its trustbusting mandate. This allowed the American film industry – abetted by a wave of acclaimed foreign films – to create movies with more mature political, social, and sexual content than those allowed under earlier production codes.

The American rating system – G, M (soon to become PG), R, and X – enacted in 1968 by Hollywood's own trade association, the Motion Picture Association (MPAA), was a classic model of self-regulation, Lewis says, uniting competitors in a system that would benefit all by tapping into younger audiences seeking freedom from all manner of socially restrictive codes. That system also, however, created with its adults-only X rating a new market for porn movies, first in soft-core features made by established independent studios and then in hardcore films utilizing the now de rigeur “money shot” (male ejaculation). The sudden box-office success of those films, Lewis claims, posed a significant new threat to mainstream Hollywood that would only be halted by a Supreme Court ruling in 1973 that made “free” speech the regulatory province of local communities. As well documented and well presented as the rest of his work is, Lewis falls short in his ultimate argument. While trade journals did pay significant attention to the porn industry in the early 1970s, and while a few porn films made a lot of money, mainstream studio releases still dominated box-office charts. And he never fully connects the influence of porn to the rise of the blockbuster mentality that came to dominate conglomerate Hollywood in the late 1970s through today. Nonetheless, Lewis' book is a fascinating work of film history that takes as many dares, and with far greater success, as some of the films he discusses.

Augustana College

JEFFREY S. MILLER

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803507046

Constance B. Schulz, ed., *Michigan Remembered: Photographs from the Farm Security Administration and the Office of War Information, 1936–1943* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001, \$34.95). Pp. 236. ISBN 0 8143 2820 2.

Pretty soon every State of the Union will have its own compendium of Farm Security Administration photographs which will evoke historical interest and cultural nostalgia in equal measure. Constance Schulz has already edited three of them, having previously trawled the FSA–OWI file for images of South Carolina and Kansas. The format of the Michigan album typifies a genre in which the images themselves, properly, take centre stage. However, readers expecting to admire the work of the luminaries of Roy Stryker's team will be disappointed. Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange and Ben Shahn were not assigned to Michigan and of the Historical Section's principal photographers, only Russell Lee's work is represented substantially here. The collection is dominated by John Vachon, the Historical Section's

messenger and archivist, who developed his camera skills through his association with the unit, and Arthur Siegel, the Detroit-based photographer who worked on a freelance basis for Stryker during the wartime years. Their prominence is a welcome reminder of the depth of Stryker's team and evidently, in this instance, it is warranted by the quantitative contributions of the two photographers to the Historical Section's visual material on Michigan.

The volume not only registers the aesthetic merits of the photographs of these less well-known members of Stryker's group, it also alerts us to the fact that they were products of missions assigned by administrators and bureaucrats in Washington. It is also notable that Schulz's selection yields no stark or dramatic symbols of rural poverty, which are to be found in other southern or Far Western collections. Those images in the sections on the Upper Peninsula and rural Lower Michigan clearly represent the constituencies which benefited from federal economic and social rehabilitation programmes, however the general reader may wonder how they symbolise a society in the throes of economic depression, as described by William Mulligan in his introductory essay. Even Vachon's studies of migrant fruit pickers and packers lack the charge and impact of Jack Delano and Marion Post Wolcotts' work on the same subject in North Carolina and Florida. In fact, over 75 per cent of the album's 150 images are devoted to Michigan in wartime, and they record wartime preparedness, industrial mobilisation and the home front. In Michigan, as elsewhere, the project's subjects and their treatment were occasioned by broader institutional objectives, rather than the inclination or caprice of the individual photographer, and, as Schulz's own introductory essay explains, after the outbreak of war, the Historical Section was directed to shift the emphasis of its work from recording rural disadvantage to celebrating American economic might and muscle. Detroit symbolised the nation's industrial strength mobilised for wartime purposes through elegiac studies of assembly lines, industrial machinery, military ordnance and the recruitment of women into the workforce. FSA photographers proclaimed the values of wartime America through images of the city's ethnic mosaic, civic ceremonies to promote the war effort and of the children who represented the nation's future.

Schulz's selection will challenge some preconceived notions about FSA photography because, in general, the images produced in Michigan lack the critical edge and liberal concern of FSA photography at its most indignant. However, at points the collection does reveal a very different point of view. Although Stryker insisted upon distinguishing the documentary method of his photographers from photojournalism, some images in the Michigan collection have an uncommon political immediacy. These include Sheldon Dick's studies of the sit-down strikers of Flint in 1937, Arthur Siegel's representations of the Father Coughlin phenomenon in Royal Oak during 1939 and, in particular, Siegel and Vachon's images of segregated housing and the riots at the Sojourner Truth project in 1942. Perhaps it will be these images which the general reader will find most intriguing and which represent the FSA-OWI project at its most apodictic and most uncharacteristic.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803517042

Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Born in Bondage: Growing Up Enslaved in the Antebellum South* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000, £23.50). Pp. 272. ISBN 0 674 00162 1.

The WPA interviews with ex-slaves in the 1930s have become an essential tool for historians of American slavery since becoming widely available in the 1970s and have had a major influence upon the study of the subject. Surprisingly, given that the vast majority of those interviewed were of a tender age when in bondage, there has been little investigation of the experience of childhood in the slave South. Willie Lee Rose's pioneering essay in 1982 was only recently followed by Wilma King's *Stolen Childhood* (1995) and now by Marie Jenkins Schwartz's *Born in Bondage*. This book has solid foundations. It follows the life cycle of slaves from birth, through "early childhood" (2–5 years), the "middle years" (5–10), overlapping with the less clearly defined period as "youth" (8–12), followed by the teenage years of "adolescence" during which slaves became full hands. It provides a fascinating insight into the complex and varied experiences of growing up enslaved. Each stage was marked by conflict between the needs of children, parents and owner, concerning issues of housing, food, clothing, education, religion, courtship, marriage and work. Children performed an incredible variety of duties, taking on increased responsibilities as they grew older, until they were eventually enticed into the field by the promise of rewards. They were economically valuable not only to the owner, but to slave families as well, who received extra allowances and utilised their labour within the household.

Born in Bondage is much more than a study of slave childhood. By exploring the struggle of slaves to establish a primary input in protecting and nurturing their offspring to adulthood, it reveals a great deal about the master–slave relationship. Schwartz provides a compelling social history of life within the slave quarters, comparing experiences in different areas and on different types and sizes of plantations. She looks at big issues across the South rather than confining analysis to one specific location as has been the trend in recent years. Schwartz departs from recent trends in other ways. The dynamics of slave childhood are placed within the web of paternalistic relations which Eugene Genovese depicted so strikingly. Harsh treatment of a child enraged the slave community and owners could expect a corresponding drop in the quality of work. Whilst not ignoring the postrevisionist emphasis upon brutality and separation, nor the slaveholder's frequent interference and desire "to teach boys and girls that they – not parents – headed the plantation household," she argues convincingly that slaves exploited their owner's need for efficient labour and for healthy children to their advantage.

University College Northampton

DAVID BROWN

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803527049

John Shelton Lawrence and Robert Jewett, *The Myth of the American Superhero* (Grand Rapids, Mich. and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002, \$27.00). Pp. 344. ISBN 0 802 84911 3.

John Shelton Lawrence and Robert Jewett in their book *The Myth of the American Superhero* define a feature of US popular culture, easily recognisable but never named before, and call it “the American monomyth,” a variation of Joseph Campbell’s (*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*) classical monomyth. By analysing books, TV programmes, films, comics, video games ... they achieve a description of its main characteristics. They define the archetypal plot formula: “A community in a harmonious paradise is threatened by evil; normal institutions fail to contend with this threat, a selfless superhero emerges to renounce temptation and carry out the redemptive task; aided by fate, his decisive victory restores the community to its paradisiacal condition; the superhero then recedes into obscurity.” While Campbell’s hero undergoes travails and adventures in order to return to his community a mature and integrated man, the American superhero leaves alone, in search for more adventures. The female variety of the American monomyth (*Heidi*-style narratives) substitutes manipulation through care and love for violence, and the central character, in most occasions, takes her place in society after completing her redemptive task.

Lawrence and Jewett divide their book into five parts, with musical titles, and use an “ethical and historical method.” They trace the origins of the monomyth to what they call the “axial decade,” during the Depression (from 1929 until the end of the 1930s), when many of the American superheroes made their first appearance. They also study historical antecedents, from colonial literature to *The Virginian* and Buffalo Bill. The authors analyse multiple examples of the monomyth (*Star Trek*, *Left Behind*, *Star Wars*, *Touched by an Angel*, *The Turner Diaries*, Disney films ...) and decry its lack of support for democratic ideals, and its negative view of established religion. Although the book is useful as an exhaustive analysis of mythical motifs in popular American culture, it is somewhat limited by its methodology. Using the model inferred by the analysis of the sources to provide a reading of those same sources results in a stalemate. The lack of specificity in studying the different texts, with no consideration for the variety of media and genres surveyed, or for any other critical theories (deconstruction, post-structuralism ...), hinders the book’s aims, denying the possibility of alternative interpretations. The demythologising project of the book is badly served by an essentialist conception of “democracy” and “religion” (never defined in the text) and by a certain degree of compromise in analysing some of America’s institutions. The authors are at their best when pointing out horrific analogies with real-life violence (Timothy McVeigh and the Unabomber), but their overall analysis ignores the dynamic and bi-directional nature of the media, and would benefit from an incorporation of theories of spectatorship and the subject.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803537045

Manisha Sinha, *The Counterrevolution of Slavery: Politics and Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000, £41.50 cloth, £14.95 paper). Pp. 362. ISBN 0 8078 2571 9, 0 8078 4884 0.

Manisha Sinha's *The Counterrevolution of Slavery* is likely to become the definitive account of antebellum political culture and ideology in South Carolina. Historians have long recognized the peculiar nature of South Carolina politics and they have linked it to the fierce proslavery and extremist states' rights' position developed by South Carolina's master class. Sinha's book critically reviews the results of decades of scholarship in the field and at the same time seeks to provide a new paradigm for the understanding of South Carolina's political culture within the context of sectional conflicts over slavery and the crisis which eventually led to southern secession. Arguing with those scholars who claim that "planters developed an extremely conservative and elitist version of republicanism," Sinha maintains instead that South Carolina elite's "vindication of racial slavery led to the questioning of the ideals of universal liberty, equality, and democracy that lay at the heart of the antebellum American republic." In their commitment to a "slavery-centered, conservative and anti-democratic discourse" of southern nationalism – Sinha argues – South Carolina planters were not exceptional because they were different from, but, rather, because they were ahead of, the planters of their sister states in the South.

Sinha's analysis of South Carolina's anti-democratic political culture focuses exclusively on the speeches and papers of what she calls "planter-politicians," by which she means the articulated and politically active members of the state's ruling class. She gives a detailed account of their reactions to specific sectional crises which include Nullification, the 1850 Convention, the movement to reopen the slave trade, and secession. Even though the narrative is elegant and the evidence supported by a large amount of primary sources, it is fair to say that little new is added by Sinha's analysis of these crucial moments in antebellum political history, even in light of her supposed "new paradigm" for the understanding of South Carolina's political culture. Doubtless, there is much to be said for the anti-Democratic and anti-Republican slave-centered planter ideology and its extremist version in South Carolina, but the idea is hardly new. It is, in fact, the other side of the coin to what Sinha calls the "republican paradigm": the idea that southern commitment to slavery was perceived by Northerners as increasingly at odds with, and manifestly violating, Republican values, in spite of the planters' rhetoric and propaganda. At the same time, what is consistently lacking in Sinha's book is the analysis of the crucial link between the proslavery argument and the master-slave relationship, what allowed southern planters to claim that slavery was a positive good and therefore not in contradiction with Republicanism.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803547041

Lyde Cullen Sizer, *The Political Work of Northern Women Writers and the Civil War, 1850–1872* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000, £13.95). Pp. 348. ISBN 0 807 84885 9.

Louisa May Alcott's 1873 novel *Work* concludes with an image of gender solidarity, as the heroine Christie Devon sits surrounded by female friends. Reaching out her hands, Alcott writes that "with one accord they laid their hands on hers, a loving league of sisters, old and young, black and white, rich and poor, each ready to do her part to hasten the coming of the happy end." This moment of shared female responsibility and moral agency, Lyde Cullen Sizer argues in her study of women's writing throughout the Civil War period, was often more rhetorical than actual. Assertions of universal womanhood such as Alcott's were commonly articulated by white middle-class women who, Sizer writes, "constructed an appropriate standard of behavior meant to create and sustain national unity." Working within the constraints of the separatist ideology of "separate spheres," women's assertions of female authority tended to (albeit quietly) assume a hierarchy of race and class. African American and working-class voices were excluded from the narratives of women's work, which the Civil War provoked.

Sizer's book is a thorough study of female assertions of political power through written discourse. Her account is expansive and complex. We progress from the early years of the war, when the conflict's moral purposes (and women's keen insight into those purposes) were emphasised, to the problems of Reconstruction, when writers such as Lydia Maria Child and Rebecca Harding Davis focused on the acute economic and social problems faced by freed African Americans. Sizer shows how Davis, whose importance as a writer is justifiably growing, made explicit the connection between slavery and a free labour ideology embraced by the North. For Davis, the war had implications, which extended beyond the moral and theological arguments of many of her abolitionist colleagues, and Sizer demonstrates how she placed class and economic conflict firmly at the centre of the narratives of women's influence. Similarly, stories of front-line nursing show how, even amidst the carnage, tensions arose between doctors and nurses, and between nurses of different classes, over matters of female behaviour, language and assertiveness. For some women, separate spheres were firmly enforced in that most "public" of places, the field hospital.

The ambition of this book is at times its weakness. Sizer sets out with the intention of tracking the writing of nine women writers over this defining period in American history. That in itself is a large undertaking, but in addition the reader is exposed to a wide variety of additional writers and works that run the risk of obscuring the central narrative of her study. Occasionally we are given the briefest of plot summaries, when perhaps a more focused book would have concentrated in more *textual* detail on Sizer's choice of core works. The historical and social accounts of these works are impeccable and that finally is the purpose and value of her book.

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803557048

Justine Tally, *The Story of Jazz: Toni Morrison's Dialogic Imagination* (Hamburg: LIT VERLAG, 2001, \$22.95). Pp. 150. ISBN 3 8258 5364 0.

This is the second volume of Justine Tally's trilogy on Toni Morrison's monumental late twentieth-century trilogy. Going backwards, Tally has usefully delineated a pathway to understand Morrison's *Paradise* in *Paradise Reconsidered: Toni Morrison's Histories and Truths* (LIT VERLAG, 1999), and will proceed to a monograph on *Beloved*. Tally is a conscientious critic navigating through much of the previous criticisms of *Jazz* before moving to a forthright negotiation of the novel in relation to an admirably clear exposition of Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of storytelling and the dialogic. In particular she thoroughly understands Bakhtin's monologic/dialogic binary and uses it to fully flesh out ideas in the novel such as the way characters are shown as being caught between an official monologic cultural dynamic exemplified by such forms as newspapers, street signs etc. and more dialogic forms such as jazz and oral folklore. On storytelling she notes that the "whole process ... becomes part and parcel of the significance of the novel" and that the novel itself is "about the ways and means of storytelling itself and the language of narrative process." There is also an excellent close reading of the novel in relation to detective fiction.

Less assured is Tally's exposition of the limitations of the so called "jazz critics" of Morrison. Following Alan Munton she considers that "jazz is a rather over-worked metaphor," that such critics have been "convincingly trounced" by Munton's article in the *Journal of American Studies* (August 1997) and that their reading of the novel in terms of jazz is a "distraction." Although, I would be the first to admit that such critics sometimes allowed their enthusiasm to overcome their critical acumen (*mea culpa*), Tally's dismissal undermines a more integrative reading that could have used Bakhtinian theory to negotiate between the jazz in the novel and the jazz it seeks to honour. Jazz critics such as Paul Berliner (on improvisation) and Ingrid Monson (on antiphony) would have been useful here and their absence means that the book's value as a commentary on the cultural context of Morrison's work on promulgating the importance of jazz is rather undermined. As literary criticism, Tally's work is an exemplary reading, explicating difficult theoretical ideas and applying them most appositely. Her historical context for the novel is also assured and comprehensive giving a context to the work that supports the close criticism. An assured follow up to her first book on *Paradise*, I await with interest the final volume on *Beloved*.

University of Central Lancashire

ALAN RICE

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803567044

Seth Wolitz (ed.), *The Hidden Isaac Bashevis Singer* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001, \$40.00). Pp. 240. ISBN 0 292 79147 X.

The premise of this collection of essays is, as clearly stated in Wolitz's introduction to the text, "to resurrect, recover, and restore the authentic voice and vision of the writer known to his Yiddish readers as Yitskhok Bashevis." Undoubtedly this is a vital contribution to the field of Singer criticism that, thus far, has concentrated

predominantly on the English translations (such as Irving Malin's *Critical Views of Isaac Bashevis Singer* [1969] and Grace Farrell's *Critical Essays on Isaac Bashevis Singer* [1996]). Jan Schwarz's contribution, "'Death is the Only Messiah': Three Supernatural Stories by Yitskhok Bashevis," is a superb exploration of the weaving of mythological and historical strands of Judaism in Singer's short fiction. Irving Saposnik's "A Canticle for Isaac: A *Kaddish* for Bashevis" is an intriguing study of Singer's relationship with America and the English translations of his texts. Indeed the essays themselves, written by scholars who, in the words of Wolitz himself, "are all committed to the serious study of Yiddish culture and its institutional expression," are an invaluable addition to the canon of Singer criticism.

The key fault of the collection, regrettably, lies in the sweeping statements that form much of Wolitz's introduction. Indeed, the assertion that immediately precedes the above quote is that "this is the first assemblage" of such a collection from scholars in the Yiddish field. Yet in David Neal Miller's *Recovering the Carnon: Essays on Isaac Bashevis Singer* (1986), the introduction clearly states that his text "has been conceived as a collective effort on the part of fourteen scholars in the field of Yiddish studies representing a variety of interests and critical orientations." However, this statement pales in comparison to Wolitz's declaration at the close of his introduction to the collected essays, where he claims that "all serious literary scholarship treating Isaac Bashevis Singer and his writings must henceforth consult and be cognisant of the Yiddish language he wrote in, the Yiddish culture he wrote about and, above all, his own Yiddish text." Wolitz, from this statement, would appear to be somewhat blithely ignoring Barthes, Foucault and Derrida in one fell swoop. Issues concerning Singer's divided literary consciousness are, it would seem, to be brushed under the carpet in favour of the strictly dogmatic approach that Wolitz outlines. Whilst his wish to bring the Yiddish originals to far a greater degree of public awareness are undoubtedly laudatory, his almost pre-theoretical approach to what should form Singer study in the future would doubtless prove as restrictive as the translation-based canon of existing criticism that he is attempting to overthrow.

University of Glasgow

KIRSTY JARDINE

Journal of American Studies, 37 (2003), 1. DOI: 10.1017/S0021875803577040

Jeffrey Robert Young, *Domesticating Slavery: The Master Class in Georgia and South Carolina, 1670–1837* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999, £42.95 cloth, £15.95 paper). Pp. 336. ISBN 0 807 2490 9, 0 807 4776 3.

In *Domesticating Slavery*, Jeffrey Young sets to explain and analyse the rise to power of southern slaveholders in the seaboard states of South Carolina and Georgia between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Young focuses on the Revolutionary and Jeffersonian period and follows the slaveholders' development of their identity as a ruling class. He argues that the main feature of this identity was the philosophy of "corporate individualism," which allowed slaveholders to blend a "modern defense of hierarchical slaveowning society with fundamentally bourgeois domestic conceptions of the loving family." In an attempt to take the analysis of the mind of the

master class a step further than the definition of planters as either paternalists or capitalists, Young claims that his “new paradigm” makes a major contribution in resolving the contradiction between the two views by showing how planters “articulated their familial [read paternalistic] metaphors for slavery using a vocabulary of bourgeois [read capitalist] individualism and domesticity.” According to Young, “the recognition of individual rights inherent in the familial metaphor” of paternalism resulted from the slaveholders’ exposure to both the capitalist market and the Christian culture in which they were immersed and was the pillar of the philosophy of “corporate individualism.”

In his impressive attempt at finding a middle ground between the paternalist vs. capitalist position, Young follows in the footsteps of the most recent scholarship on slavery; yet, his argument is only partially convincing for two reasons. Firstly, having set the guidelines of his main idea in the introduction, Young hardly uses the rest of the book to develop the implications of his thoughts through sustained analysis of “corporate individualism” as an ideology which informed the daily relations of masters with their slaves and fathers with their children. Although Young gives a well-written and informative account of the rise of the master class, his choice of implementing a strict chronological analysis does not allow him to provide sufficiently detailed examples of how “corporate individualism” worked for particular planters or on particular plantations at specific points in time. Secondly, even though the amount of information and sources consulted is overwhelming, most of the material is related exclusively to South Carolina and Georgia. Besides the fact that it is difficult to make generalisations assuming that planters in other southern states would have simply adopted the ideology of the planters residing in the seaboard areas, Young’s book actually shows a rather old-fashioned approach in privileging the analysis of the planter aristocracy of the oldest part of the South over the study of the frontier slaveholders of the western cotton regions.

National University of Ireland, Galway

ENRICO DAL LAGO