Divided into three parts (the first devoted to personal reminiscences of the author, the second to essays on individual works from Malamud’s œuvre and the last to thematic “threads” or “patterns” in his fiction), Evelyn Avery’s book is more a tribute or homage to Malamud than a conventional collection of critical essays. A personal friend of the late novelist and short-story writer herself, Avery writes with unashamed admiration both of his work and of the man himself in her introduction and Nicholas Delbanco announces candidly in his essay “On The Magic Barrel” that he “can’t and won’t pretend to critical distance; this is an author I loved and admire”. Why Malamud tends to inspire such reverence, when those writers with whom he is most often associated (his Jewish-American contemporaries, Saul Bellow and Philip Roth) provoke polemical, often acrimonious critical debate, is not a question that any of the contributors to this volume consider, but it seems to me questionable whether such an approach does justice to a writer whose work is shot through with ambiguities, most of them intentional, some arguably not.

At any rate there are some fine pieces here: Delbanco’s portrait of the artist as “a high priest of aesthetics … wearing a business suit” whose fiction is distinguished by its “colloquial austerity of language” sheds interesting light on Malamud’s working practices; Joel Salzburg’s analysis of the correspondence between the writer and a little-known contemporary artist, Rosemarie Beck, is fascinating, if replete (like the letters themselves) with tantalising lacunae (though the essay itself is entitled ‘The Rhythms of Friendship in the Life of Art’ it seems clear that sexual tension and artistic rivalry complicated the ‘friendship’); Karen L. Poster’s discussion of the pattern of “broken lives imperfectly redeemed through restorative suffering and the acceptance of membership within a flawed human community” (59) as it manifests itself in “The Last Mohican” makes a persuasive case for Malamud as at once a profoundly humanist and Jewish writer; Sanford Pinsker provides an entertaining rereading of A New Life that emphasizes the tragicomic aspects of Malamud’s fiction; and Victoria Aarons offers an excellent formal analysis of Malamud’s use of the trope of suspension.

Overall, then, Avery’s book is a very welcome addition to the critical literature on Malamud and contains some truly groundbreaking work (particularly Aaron’s essay, which is one of the first pieces really to get to grips with the mechanics of Malamud’s beguiling but at times mannered prose), but the picture it presents...
of its subject is only a partial one: heavily weighted towards the realistic, moral, humanist Malamud at the expense of the surrealistic, subversive, sceptical Malamud.

University of Reading

DAVID BRAUNER


The classic studies of American slavery always had one thing in common: a tendency to treat slavery, especially in the antebellum era, as rigid, static and unchanging. As Kenneth Stampp argued half a century ago, historians of slavery could largely ignore chronology because the fundamental features of slavery were constant over time. Stampp was wrong. Ira Berlin’s major achievement in his 1999 book on colonial North American slavery, Many Thousands Gone, and in his new Generations of Captivity, is to show that we cannot understand North American slavery if we do not understand that it was an ever-changing and historically contingent institution. What is even clearer in this book than in his first synthesis of slavery is that slavery was also not geographically constant. At first glance, Generations of Captivity seems a mere reprise of his earlier work. It is much more than this, however. It is a brilliant synthesis of an enormous mass of secondary literature based around the theme of historical change as the driver of slave life in the Americas. What Berlin manages to do is show that there was no such thing as a stable slave system. The “lightening-like expansion of plantation slavery in the southern interior of the United States” after 1800 led to profound changes for slaves, of such a magnitude that they constituted a second Middle Passage. What he also shows is that plantation slavery, like capitalism in Schumpeter’s classic formulation, was a form of systematic creation and destruction, ever evolving, ever mutating, and with a power to mould human behaviour in reaction to those mutations. Berlin is at pains to show how slaves themselves modified the system of plantation slavery they found themselves in and show how slaves forced planters to deal with them as people rather than as just commodities. But it is the power and the constantly changing nature of the institution that impresses. Nevertheless, slavery faced immense challenges, not only from the people caught up within the slave system but also from the even more powerful forces that were transforming the American North into a free, capitalist society and which eventually caused the destruction of slavery and the advent of a sort of freedom for ex-slaves. Berlin’s thesis is highly persuasive, highly original, firmly based on an extraordinary mastery of secondary literature and likely to be the starting point for all studies of American slavery for a long time. His two books taken together are a remarkable achievement and a landmark in American history and history writing.

University of Sussex

TREVOR BURNARD
American politics, Bivins argues, is no longer supported by popular consensus, and one of the indications of discontent is the emergence of groupings of religious believers who reject the liberal polity as individualist and irreligious. He chooses three examples: the evangelical Sojourners Community, the community that has grown up around the Catholic pacifist Berrigan brothers and the Christian Right. The first two are far less familiar. The Berrigans, first active in the 1960s pouring blood onto conscription records, later left broken dolls on the lawn of the White House and attacked military aircraft with hammers. Sojourners, which emerged at the beginning of the 1970s, declared that if Jesus was Lord, the Pentagon and Gulf Oil was not. It has protested American support for repressive regimes, demonstrated against the Gulf War and conducted Way of the Cross processions in the nation’s capital, stopping outside centres of economic power.

One noticeable characteristic of his framework is his unhappiness with the left/right distinction. The Berrigans and Sojourners are not a Christian left, he contends, arguing that the latter’s belief that it is pursuing a third way encapsulates both the centrality of its specifically religious commitment and the dissolution of ideological certainties. But if this is debatable, what is particularly so is the extension of his argument to the Christian Right. Rather than necessarily obscuring religiosity, right (and left) have long taken religious forms, and Bivins’s argument is yet further brought into question by his view that the right originated in Revolutionary France in defence of individual rights. The Christian Right is socially conservative, and the right of 1789 would have had no problem in recognizing a kindred spirit. Certainly such terms as left and right can be misleading. The Berrigans, for instance, are anti-abortion as well as anti-war. But if we can learn a lot from this fascinating study, we may not be persuaded that they, the Sojourners Community and the Christian Right represent a new mobilization that transcends old vocabularies.
Buss and Herman focus particularly on the engagement of Christian Right groups with the “new political spaces” that have opened up for nongovernmental organizations at the United Nations in recent years, especially UN-hosted conferences such as the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women. They argue, convincingly, that while the Christian Right is fundamentally opposed to the secularism, liberalism and “international feminism” it sees issuing forth from the UN as a consequence of “globalization,” it is a mistake to simply dismiss the Christian Right as an “anti-globalization” or “anti-modern” movement. On the contrary, the activism of the Christian Right at the UN highlights the extent to which the movement has “embraced” certain aspects of globalization as a means of promoting “conservative social change.” In this respect, Buss and Herman also point to the Christian Right’s attempt to bring conservative Christian, Islamic and Jewish organizations together in a “permanent, global, interfaith” alliance of orthodox faiths committed to a “natural family” agenda, beginning with the World Congress of Families II (WCFII) conference held in Geneva in 1999.

The authors are clear, however, that the Christian Right groups that are active in the international arena do not represent a “transnational” or “global” social movement in themselves. Rather, they are a “particular subset of the US Christian Right as a whole,” and the book’s articulation of the tensions that exist between the domestic and international elements of the Christian Right is one of its major strengths. Many domestic Christian Right groups are committed isolationists, opposed to any US role in international organizations, for example, while others view the UN as being part of an international satanic conspiracy connected to the “Second Coming.” Given such attitudes, the mere engagement of Christian Right activists with the UN is somewhat problematic. Similarly, the promotion of a WCFII alliance with orthodox Islamic states runs directly counter to a domestic Christian Right discourse which sees such states as “exemplifying satanic force and anti-Christian persecution.” Even more intriguingly, Buss and Herman note that “behind” the concern of Christian Right activists with the growing power of “the global” is an “implicit” but significant “valorization of the nation state” – as the muscular guardian of religious and cultural beliefs – which sits uncomfortably with the domestic Christian Right’s economic neo-liberalism and fervent hostility to “big government.”

Wilfrid Laurier University

DARREN J. MULLOY


The domestic life of Civil War America has received growing attention over the past two decades, not least from feminist scholars who have been exploring the home front as a domestic battleground in its own right. Broadening out the focus beyond gender, the editors of the present collection are correct in their observation that the home front of the South has claimed the lion’s share of scholarly attention, due to a
conventional, though misleading, assumption: “No ‘total war’ gripped northern society, as it did Southern, and the demands war made in conscription, inflation, limits on political dissent, and even emancipation ... required an adjustment more than a restructuring of Northern society” (xiv–xv). Fordham University Press’s “The North’s Civil War Series,” edited by Paul A. Cimbala, has done much to redress this regional imbalance: hence the appearance of this new collection, the eighteenth title in the series.

Cimbala and Miller have assembled a collection focussing on the “new identities” imposed upon veterans and non-combatants alike, during and after the war — identities imposed by law, politics, separation, distance, region, amputation, a great host of external forces. The collection is divided into three parts, with part one focussing on the struggle to fill the ranks of the Northern armies; thus, the topics here include draft resistance in two Pennsylvanian counties and manpower mobilization in Iowa — all of which should serve to remind us that Northern home-front dissent went well beyond the New York City Draft Riots of 1863. The second part — ‘Northerners and Their Men in Arms’ — focusses on the desires for communication and solidarity between those on the home front and those in the ranks. Writers and readers of battlefield and home-front letters all strove to recreate the sensations of wartime — through the very act of writing and reading — while benevolent and Christian organizations sought to bind together soldiers and sailors with each other as well as with the home-front society. Moreover, when soldiers from a particular region such as New England went to war, they brought with them a particular home-front culture — in this case a highly publicized and often misunderstood abolitionist one — into a distant theatre of war. Part three, on the transition from war to peace, includes essays on returned prisoners of war and the public memory, amputees and the meaning of their injuries, the impact of the war on marriages, and the trials of both black and white veterans on Northern streets and in organizations — group of essays resounding with a post-Vietnam consciousness.

University of Central Lancashire

WILL KAUFMAN


What were the implications of the thermonuclear revolution for American Realist scholars of international relations during the Cold War? This is the ambitious question that Campbell Craig sets out to answer in Glimmer of a New Leviathan: Total War in the Realism of Niebuhr, Morgenthau and Waltz. Specifically, Craig attempts to explain how three Realist thinkers Reinhold Niebuhr, Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Waltz addressed the new strategic challenge of the post-Second World War era: the global consequences of a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union. Through a blend of interdisciplinary approaches — Intellectual History and International Relations theory — Craig has written a compelling account of how Niebuhr, Morgenthau and Waltz grappled with the central role of nuclear weapons in the making and execution of US national security policy.
The book makes three significant contributions to the intellectual history of the Cold War and contemporary debates on Realist conceptions of International Relations theory. First, Craig presents the first systematic attempt to analyse the Realist School’s response to the nuclear security dilemma during the Cold War. By thoroughly interrogating the key writings and private papers of Niebuhr, Morgenthau and Waltz the author is able to demonstrate successfully the evolution of Realist thinking about nuclear war over a forty-year period from the 1940s and 1980s. While the ideas of each theorist are explored individually, Craig encourages his readers to consider the three thinkers as contributing collectively to the development of Realist conceptions of war. Second, Craig has provided useful intellectual biographies of Niebuhr, Morgenthau and Waltz within the covers of an extremely concise volume. In a few hours of reading, undergraduates, graduate students and scholars can gain valuable insights into the backgrounds, personalities and ideas that have shaped Realist theory since the Second World War. Finally, the author admirably attempts to bridge the methodological gap that exists between historical and theoretical approaches towards the discipline of International Relations. The book is based both on rigorous archival research and comprehensive textual analysis of the main writings of the three theorists under study.

In short, this is a highly commendable study of the American Realist School in the latter half of the twentieth century. It will be essential reading for students of International Relations and Diplomatic History. In their quest to understand the implications of thermonuclear weapons for contemporary diplomacy, scholars and policy-makers would do well to consult this excellent volume.

De Montfort University  
IAN JACKSON


Todd Depastino’s excellent and informative book follows the politicized trajectory of the homeless through the identity shift from hobo to tramp, and finally to bum. He opens with an account of the psychological and ideological implications of what is “home,” which lies at the core of the response to the itinerant from the working- and middle-classes alike. For Depastino, one of the most important elements of the very existence of the hobo has always been an affront to the idea of American-ness, constructed as it is around the work ethic, the family and the home. His starting point is the veritable army of vagrant ex-soldiers in the period after the Civil War and he maps out their development from disconnected individuals in search of wage labour to potential radicalized threat to capital, and finally to containment back within cultural ideals of domesticity. Central to their own self-definition is the notion of “freedom” and its contradiction of the same concept in mainstream American social politics. It is here that the conflict with “respectable” society becomes most pointed. What constitutes liberty for them is a provocation to the hard-working home-owning all-American ideal. Depastino postulates the hobo as a counter to the normative notion of property-ownership-equals-citizenship, challenging “home’s
status as the central place of being.” He does overstate his case when he claims that hoboes “transformed” the very notion of “home.” Surely, with the ultimate suppression of any hobo political collective, they unwittingly confirmed it. Minor quibbles like this aside, his research into the politics of this ostensibly apolitical entity is impressive in its scope. What is perhaps most striking is the manner in which this marginalized fraternity happily marginalized women and blacks. A particular form of masculinity permeates the hoboes’ sense of identity, which defines itself against the “feminised” and therefore detested condition of domesticity. Rejecting the dictates of an increasingly intolerant society, they had no qualms about imposing gender roles on women. Nor did they hesitate to make the road a distinctly dangerous place for black migrants. Such contradictory behaviour is shown to have played a large part in the failure to organize effectively. It is the increasing radicalization of the migrant worker that most engages Depastino, though, and his research into the rise and subsequent suppression of organized itinerants within the history of American labour politics opens up a new dimension of that record.

University of Exeter

GARY BLOHM


In the Cold War the means and the medium were the message, in the sense that its narratives were constructed by power and citizen alike according to a heightened and reflexive anxiety about the technologies and techniques deployed to wage ideological warfare. In these two books, one looking at the relations between the nascent medium of television and McCarthyism, the other examining the Cold War coordinates governing the advocacy of new forms of music in postwar France, the specific media are saturated with a weirdly internalized, claustrophobic clash of discourses pitching means of representation against representation of means, a comedy of mirrors. They are complementary: Doherty reads TV as engaged and fractured by the Cold War on the home front, the living rooms of the nuclear-frenzied family. Carroll attends to American cultural propaganda abroad, looking at the 1952 L’Œuvre du XXe siècle festival of modern music organized in Paris by Nicholas Nabokov and the CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom. In both cases, the medium, or rather interpretation of it as medium, becomes the ideological testing ground where the means of manipulation of hearts and minds are to be both realized and contested. Television, for Doherty, is a medium which could be recruited to the demagoguery of the anticommunist crusade, as instanced by McCarthy’s slimy appropriation of its power to persuade in real, live TV-time. But it could also equally be marshalled to slay the dragon it created – Edward R. Murrow used high-tech editing and videogenic techniques to expose the junior senator in the amazing See It Now broadcasts which signalled the end of Tailgunner Joe. Carroll shows how twentieth-century music, whether it take the form of twelve-tone
modernism, Boulez’s radical serialism, Stravinsky neo-classicism or Stalinist social realism, could be similarly recruited either to the camp of conservative sterility or revolutionary liberation, depending on the particular take on the discursive significances of musical form as such. At the same time, the field of contemporary music can be mapped out according to a more adventurous agenda which shows music developing a logic of its own which foils the ideological.

If much of this is familiar after years of televisual histories of McCarthyism and decades of critical theory post-Adorno, this does not take away from the fact that these two texts, in their very different ways, throw up acres of new ground in their respective minefields, both laying groundwork, after the explosions, for necessary revision of the ways we still tend to think about the Cold War.

It may be axiomatic that television is a creepy medium allowing talking heads to talk their ways into our heads the better to colonize domestic space with the state apparatus. Cold War America, according to this axiom, is proof positive of this, since its principle message to us now comes in televisual form dominated by images broadcasting the unholy alliance of pushy advertising, conformist family sitcom and McCarthy witchhunt trial-as-spectacle, an ideological coalition backed up by the disciplinary procedures of the blacklist. Yet, as Carroll demonstrates conclusively, this is not only far too one-sided a view, but it is a view which is itself conditioned by the New Frontier revisionism of the Kennedy years, which saw cinema stretching its muscles to counter the arrogant young medium by identifying it with McCarthyist mind-management. The truth lies somewhere in the left of liberal mainstream, partly due to the decencies of the television journalists who countered rightwing political abuses of the medium, partly to the ungovernable democracy of public opinion as television. One might choose to dispute Doherty’s sentimentalizing of the liberal backlash against Cold War AWARE Inc. counter-attacks (as when he sets Murrow’s Good Tuesday oration as free verse). What one cannot do after reading this book is deny it ever happened. Doherty has done some sterling research, giving a rich and thick description of the debates surrounding the rise of the blacklist, the sacking of Philip Loeb and attacks on Lucille Ball, the stiffening of censorship procedures to do with sex and race, the televising of politics after Ike’s direct addresses, the televising of the Kefauver crime committee hearings, religious Cold War broadcasting and the amazing Bishop Steen, the Murrow assassination of McCarthy, the televised Army-McCarthy hearings, and the queer subtexts governing public perceptions of the Cohn-Schine relationship. There is not much theory here, and it shows in the rather inadequate attempts to define television. Doherty nods towards McLuhan in his title and the odd sentence, but we get nothing in the way of extended discussion of what the televisual does as a so-called “cool” medium. Doherty prefers a pragmatic approach, handling the issues of live broadcasting, cutting, Nielsen demographics, air time, programming etc. in the more mundane contexts of TV code review boards, industry Variety-style chitchat, network backroom decisions and hours of painful screening of decaying kinescopes. This pragmatism is admirably matched by Doherty’s prose style, which is chunky, savvy and eloquent, giving him enviable power to tell his host of good media stories so very well. If it is true what they claim, that twentieth-century critical theory monographs have been replaced by twenty-first-century anecdotal cultural studies, then Doherty’s book is a shining example. It is not only readable, enlightening and amusing, it does
what all good books on the televisual Cold War should do: it can distinguish between hype and substance and show history in the making by recreating the contentious white noise, news and views buzzing round and through the little screen which still constitute the public sphere for so much of us.

Carroll’s book is a very different proposition, attempting to sift through the ideological tussles surrounding the Congress for Cultural Freedom’s propaganda drive in Paris by dealing with some of the more important musical theories attached to the key composers. Nabokov is portrayed very much through Boulez’s eyes as “mercenary lackey” to Stravinsky and the State Department, selling neo-classicism as Cold War liberal anticommunism in musical form. The *L’Œuvre du XXe siècle* festival is set against the cravenly communist advocates of the Prague manifesto, notably Nigg and his *Progressiste* colleagues with their woefully reactionary chorales and hymns to Joe Stalin. The real resistance to Nabokov comes from the two wings of the French modernist *avant-garde*, composers defending Schoenberg’s dodecaphonic expressionism and the structuralist Marxism of the new serial compositions from the followers of the Second Viennese school, the *musique concrète* crowd and Boulez. Carroll very bravely takes us through a great deal of material from the journals of the day, recreating the fusty and contradictory polemics associated with contemporary music, and his thesis is clear and I think well proven. This is that Nabokov stupidly underestimated the French intelligentsia, assuming they were either ignorantly neutral or communists. What he did not bargain for was the range of *troisième force* positions, neither pro-American nor pro-Soviet, which occupied the mainstream, from Sartre’s existentialism through Camusien non-aligned liberalism to the leftwing Catholics, all keen to support genuinely experimental serial and twelve tone music, all contemptuous of both the dated, petrified and monolithic neoromanticism offered up as standard fare by the Americans, and of the mind-numbingly childish dictates of Zhdanovite Stalinists. He is very interesting on the range of interpretations this complicated existential situation generated, demonstrating the propaganda drives of both the Stalinists and the Congress against serial music: for the former, serial music is elitist, subjective and symptomatic of the decadent contradictions of capitalist culture; for the latter, serialism is suspiciously leftwing, a closed shop for progressive intellectuals plotting the overthrow of tradition and the Marshall Plan benedictions of romantic US freedoms. Within the middle ground, debate rages, as in the sustained arguments between Adorno intellectuals accusing serialists of being entranced by scientism and technology with their machines for the suppression of the subject, and their opponents in the Boulez camp, accusing Schoenbergites of sloppy subjectivism, dreaming of a slate cleaned by the assault of compositional method on bankrupt conventions. The sheer complexity of the field is such that Carroll has to skim over the positions: we do not get a satisfactory account of Sartre’s existential Marxism apart from rather tired essence-*vs*-existence arguments; and, rather surprisingly in light of his championing of Boulez, the account of extended serialism is superficial. We are merely told that serial method is extended to other features of music beyond pitch. This is perhaps understandable since the book is aimed at music specialists, but it tells a story that should be essential to American Studies thinking about the early Cold War, and we ought perhaps to have been taken through exactly what Boulez did with his *Structures 1a*. But this is a valuable and closely argued study, tough and
necessary reading for anyone who still thinks music is for the birds in the ideology-free sky.

Stravinsky, in an angry little joke aimed at Boulez, said that a little old lady in a post-revolutionary Russian zoo pointed at a camel and said: “Look at what the Bolsheviks have done to horses!” The Cold War was as visibly disruptive of the ordinary world in just such imaginary-historical ways, forcing its subjects to internalize its fabrications and fears as though it were the very medium through which the world was seen, in the air like a struggle of rival musics, before the eyes like a constant trial-by-television. It was the medium which governed all media, and as such, by the Murrows and Boulezes of this world, it could be defeated on its own ground, the media of eye and ear. As America gets set once again to sing its martial music and flood the world with its neocon images in a new cold war, these two books are salutary lessons to us all.

Glasgow

ADAM PIETTE

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Several historians of US foreign relations, a field often accused of adopting an insular and insufficiently “international” perspective, are beginning to adopt and incorporate the language and concepts of globalization into their analyses of the contemporary world. As representative of this project, Eckes and Zeiler’s study aims to show how “markets, technology, and ideas, the building blocks of globalization, have had an impact on American power, diplomacy, and diplomatic conduct”, positing this as a new over-arching interpretation of twentieth-century American diplomatic history.

They argue that globalization encompasses natural security, promotes national ideals, pursues humanitarianism and expands market. ‘It is an umbrella under which they can be grouped and explained in a coherent way’ . This is a large claim, and they are not always successful in showing how deep-seated concerns about US vulnerability or the imperatives of domestic political culture are subsumed to the demands of the globalization process (recent US visa restrictions on travellers perhaps being one present-day example). Nor do they give much credence to those whose framework of US foreign relations is constructed around issues of race and racism.

That said, Eckes and Zeiler do paint a convincing picture of the remorseless advance of American business and enterprise across the globe after the closure of the internal frontier in the 1890s. American corporations, taking advantage of their superior organization and exploitation of new technologies, and with considerable assistance (in general) from the international economic policies pursued by the Federal government, helped to bring about the closer integration of the world economy in their search for profits and commercial opportunity. The United States
gradually displaced British supremacy in the fields of finance, communications and transportation, a development confirmed by the boost given to the American position in the global economy by the effects of the two world wars. They hold that globalization is a process involving the expanding global reach and vision of large corporations and the belief that free trade, private enterprise and markets foster efficiency and economic growth. The authors widen their definition of globalization to include “scientific and technological developments, popular culture, the Information Revolution, and concomitant political and institutional changes”. 

Globalization and the American Century features a plethora of statistics detailing changing patterns of world trade and investment, covers the various rounds of GATT negotiations, and the aftermath of the Nixon shocks of 1971 (179–83), and contains occasional digressions into the spread of American-influenced culture and entertainment.

D. Clayton Brown is somewhat less expansive in his definition of globalization, finding it in the dynamics of a more and more integrated world economy. His concern is to show how this development since 1945 has had an impact on the United States, and how American leadership, innovation and enterprise has, in turn, been a motor for change in the global economy. Whereas Eckes and Zeiler adopt a straightforward chronological approach, Brown provides thematic chapters on trade, technology, markets, immigration, culture and terrorism. Some of the views presented in Globalization and America since 1945 do not bear close examination. “This critical step in the postwar period,” Brown inelegantly contends of the Marshall Plan, “could arguably be regarded as the first step by the United States in becoming a global power.” On another occasion, he claims that “Globalization imposed by America’s sense of mission reached its high point with the Vietnam War,” which through television made “the geography, politics, and nature of human life in South-east Asia [become] familiar” to Americans, and “this development brought Asia into their dialogue and thoughts on a new scale and thereby broadened the country’s Europe-centred outlook to include the Pacific regions of the world.” “Compared with Muslims,” Brown sweepingly (and crassly) writes, “Asians [in the contemporary United States] exhibited more diversity in their lives.” Both books under review contain a disappointing number of typos and errors. In Eckes and Zeiler’s work, Hitler’s first name varies from Adolph to Adolf (53, 63), while the Outer Space Treaty was concluded in 1967, not 1966 (168); and strictly speaking South Vietnam was not brought “into the alliance fold of SEATO in the 1950s.” From Brown we are told that George Kennan served as US ambassador to the Soviet Union after 1945, when he never filled that post, US diplomatic relations with Communist China were opened in 1978, when it was the following year (14), that the USSR ceased to exist in 1992 and that the World Trade Organization came into being in 1994.

Both these books tend to share the basic assumption that the role of the United States has been central in bringing the process of globalization to fruition in the late-twentieth century. Thus, Eckes and Zeiler see the World Trade Organization as the lineal heir to John Hay’s Open Door Notes. It is perhaps for this reason that both also have trouble disentangling “Americanization” from globalization. Underlying both texts is also the message that the influence of the United States, through its promotion of globalization, has been beneficial. Thus, for Eckes and Zeiler, “… in
the 1920s, American capitalism – and the technological innovations associated with
the automobile and mass production – proved an effective instrument of globalization,
bringing people and nations closer together, harmonizing methods of production,
creating jobs, and helping to bridge political differences.” The 1930s, in this
picture, become an unfortunate and temporary aberration. Their analysis of the
post-war era is similarly upbeat: “Aware that a troubled world had an insatiable
appetite for American values, goods, and services, US leaders exploited their com-
parative advantage in communications and marketing to spread the American dream
of democracy, prosperity, mass consumption and individual enterprise. In the long
Cold War, that formula proved a winner.” Brown sees the arrival of open markets as
the trigger for the spread of a democratic culture, while ‘The march toward global-
ization, beginning in 1945 and led by the United States, contributed greatly to the
improved standard of living around the world and facilitated freedom of move-
ment.” There is little room for discussion of the dispossessed or poor in these two
accounts, though contemporary anti-globalization protests are given some treat-
ment. In tracing most of what globalization entails back to the initiatives of US
political leaders and the activities of US corporations, there is also the danger of
missing the less visible, structural features of global capitalism that have driven the
process forward.

Royal Holloway, University of London

MATTHEW JONES


Cara A. Finnegan, Picturing Poverty. Print Culture and FSA Photographs

Scholars who have searched for FSA photographs in media outlets will be well aware
of representational anomalies, such as the juxtaposition of images of displaced
tenants alongside beauty queens or movie stars. They will also be aware from F. Jack
Hurley’s work, that the project went through a series of stages. FSA images were
recycled in different cultural contexts and their values and meanings were trans-
mogrified in the process. Cara Finnegan’s book, informed by rhetorical studies,
focusses upon the circulation of FSA images and the ways in which they were
embedded in the media that reproduced them. This involves a great deal of con-
textualisation – not only about the photographic project and the New Deal agencies
whose programmes it represented, but also about the magazines in which the FSA
photographs appeared. The pitfall, as Finnegan recognizes, is that her volume may
be construed as an analysis of those publications which are central to her study
rather than the FSA photographs themselves. Indeed, in her discussion of The Survey
Graphic, U.S. Camera, and Look, only a few of the entire number of FSA photographs
that were reproduced form the object of her attention. As for the magazines
themselves, they are very selective examples of the “print culture” in which FSA
photographs appeared. Government reports, regional office instruction booklets,
exhibitions, the popular press, and collaborative academic studies are omitted from
Finnegan’s purview. Nevertheless, the terms in which these publications are incor-
porated into her analysis provide an interesting framework for a study of the
dissemination of FSA images and their functions. In effect, three different types of “circulation” communities are featured: those of social science, the arts, and a popular readership. The book's argument is that the images comprised “no monolithic, overarching visual rhetoric of poverty during the Depression.” While they were frequently coopted or compromised by the media, the photographs would often conflict with or contradict the uses to which they were put. In the dogged personalism of their subjects they challenged the managerial systems objectivity of the Survey Graphic; in their poverty, they resisted its “total aestheticisation” by U.S. Camera, and in Look, the presentation of the images, encouraged passivity from their viewers rather than engagement.

As Finnegan recognizes, Roy Stryker did not care a great deal about the uses to which his images were put. The important consideration was to derive publicity for his project and to justify its existence. Neither does the Historical Section photographers' initial creativity figure prominently in her analysis. In contrast to much scholarship about the FSA photographs, Finnegan emphasizes the transmission or “circulation” of the Historical Section's images rather than their aesthetic qualities or ideological underpinnings. The images are important for their placement within publications and the ways in which they are edited or juxtaposed with captions and text. Indeed, she reveals that the images were tactile enough to be distorted through reproduction, yet often resilient enough to maintain some core meaning regardless of context or manipulation. If this suggests that Finnegan wants it all ways, she is probably correct to do so. For, the FSA photograph in situ was a product of various contexts which determined the specific “rhetoric” of the image. Whether she convincingly demonstrates that the photographs did not contribute to a coherent “rhetoric” of poverty during the New Deal period is another matter. By her diverse selection of outlets and, also, a methodology which dialectically positions images and contexts, such a conclusion was likely from the outset. Nevertheless, Finnegan understands FSA photography well. She has done significant archival work out of which she fashions rich and engagingly drawn contexts for her textual analysis. Certain sections of the book are more satisfying than others, and scholars of the project will be especially interested in her nuanced examination of the contrasting fortunes of Roy Stryker in placing FSA images in Look and Life magazines.

University of Reading

STUART KIDD


Reconstituting the American Renaissance: Emerson, Whitman, and the Politics of Representation does precisely what the title suggests. The American Renaissance and how it relates to eighteenth-century political and literary concerns is questioned, beginning with an analysis of the language of the Constitution and The Federalist Papers by Publius. Jay Grossman then dismantles F. O. Matthiessen’s model of the American Renaissance, and literature from that period is resurrected and read alongside the political discourse of the Revolution, thus re-reading and reconstituting the American
Renaissance. So convincingly does Grossman fulfil his title’s claim that we may be tempted to put aside, at least for a time, everything we think we know about the nature of the relationship between Emerson and Whitman and think (and read) again.

Reconstituting the American Renaissance interrogates the assumed nature of the Emerson-Whitman relationship by examining two of their well-known, recorded dialogues. The first is their debate, during a walk on Boston Common concerning Whitman’s projected ‘Enfans d’Adam’ poems, poems which Emerson felt it would be unwise of Whitman to publish. The second is Emerson’s 1855 congratulatory letter to Whitman on the first edition of Leaves of Grass, and Whitman’s replies to that letter. Analysing these, and selected work by the two writers Grossman’s discussion pivots on a convincing connection between slavery, the body and poetry, and highlights Emerson and Whitman’s starkly different approach to the subject of the body. Where these three interrelated subjects of slavery, the body and poetry are concerned, both writers offer their own differing opinions and interpretations.

The author’s claim that Emerson and Whitman’s writings have their different origins in facets of the Constitution demands a new reading of nineteenth-century literature alongside eighteenth-century American concerns and will be vital reading for anyone interested in these periods of American literature. The early chapters on representative strategies and their thorough examination of Publius and that period’s debate over federalism will be informative for any student or enthusiast of American studies. Grossman’s analysis of Emerson’s 1855 congratulatory letter to Whitman on the first edition of Leaves of Grass and his discernment concerning Emerson’s exclusion of the words “poet” and “poetry” in that letter, makes this essential reading for any Emerson or Whitman scholar.

University of Glasgow

CLARE ELLIOTT


In Critical Humanisms Martin Halliwell and Andy Mousley have created an extensive and profitable study. The plurality of humanisms they consider allows for a neat division of the text into several sections, each examining a specific thematic humanism. These humanisms – Romantic, existential, dialogic, civic, spiritual, pagan, pragmatic and technological – are considered through a triumvirate of thinkers whose individual positionings are read beside their thematic associates (the section concerning existential humanism, for example, comprises Jean-Paul Sartre, Hannah Arendt and Frantz Fanon). In addition to the three primary thinkers considered, each section also has a short prolegomenon allowing the authors to name-check other associated canonical thinkers. This vaguely canonical leaning is, however, not a major fault. The text employs a balanced yet diverse selection of voices, ranging from Shakespeare and Marx to contemporary thinkers such as Stuart Hall and Julia Kristeva. Furthermore, in order not to limit any exchange of ideas, these thematic sections are not hermetically sealed, as evidenced by the admission
that certain thinkers could inhabit other sections than that in which they are deployed.

However, it is in this unwillingness to delimit and restrict in the name of free-play that *Critical Humanisms* suffers. For example, in the introduction the authors propose to show how critical theory made humanism “less baggy.” By being self-conscious of the theoretical and ethical points in defining humanism, they produce a section which, however admirable its positioning, amounts to the sand upon which the body of the text is built. Indeed, the invocation of Deleuze’s and Guattari’s theory of the rhizome in the concluding chapter—which considers inhuman, posthuman and transhuman concepts—may serve as an exemplar of this shifting fluidity.

Nevertheless, *Critical Humanisms* is an expansive and multifaceted consideration. Yet, at its heart, it is also a fundamentally liberal attempt to show that the individual—long since thought dead—was, in fact, only missing. In chorus with this aim and approach, the accessible manner with which the topic is considered provides the theoretical xenophobe (or neophyte) a painless entryway into the often-times negatively perceived labyrinthine corridors of theory. That said, readers should not allow this accessibility to create a blind sense of trust. Indeed, as one of the stated aims of the authors is to examine the idea that perceived anti-humanists can be read in a humanistic vein, the potential for the text to become a Frankenstein’s monster of resurrected body-parts is high.

*University of Edinburgh*  

**KEITH MEARS**

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In 1842 and 1843, three abolitionists—Gerrit Smith, William Lloyd Garrison, and Henry Highland Garnet—delivered addresses to slaves. Through a detailed examination of these addresses and the reactions to them within the wider abolitionist community, this study charts the gradual shift in abolitionist strategy in the 1840s and 1850s, from moral suasion to violence.

The first two chapters summarize the addresses and list the various factors that helped to shape them, including the conventions at which they were delivered. They demonstrate above all the ambivalent attitude of the three abolitionists towards the use of violence. The following two chapters examine the responses of the three conventions and the wider abolitionist community to the addresses. Harrold conveys here most clearly the diversity of the abolitionist community in the early 1840s. In the last two chapters, he shows the gradual convergence of abolitionist factions in the late 1840s. Chapter five examines methods used by abolitionists in the 1840s to reach the slaves. It indicates the extent to which these methods engaged with the addresses and shows that abolitionists were extremely divided over them, with Garrisonians opposing the methods and radical political abolitionists, church-oriented abolitionists and those supporting the Liberty Party and the Free Soil Party supporting them. The last chapter shows, through an examination of the responses to a letter to the slaves delivered by Smith in 1850, that by the late 1840s most
Garrisonians had come to favour biracialism and violent means. The conclusion attempts to show the link between the addresses and the Civil War. It argues, for instance, that echoes of the addresses can be found in John Brown’s raid and the Emancipation Proclamation. This is the least convincing part in an otherwise well-argued and fluently written book.

Although the author could have engaged more with the scholarship, his analysis of the addresses succeeds in challenging existing interpretations of antebellum abolitionism. It shows, for example, that scholars can no longer hold on to the traditional dichotomy between Garrisonian non-violence and militant calls for the violent overthrow of slavery. I would, however, not only recommend The Rise of Aggressive Abolitionism to scholars with an interest in abolitionism but also to undergraduate students. As it discusses the addresses in relation to developments within the abolitionist community, it provides an excellent introduction to the abolitionist movement. Harrold has made it easy for students to follow his original account of the shift in abolitionist tactics in the 1840s and 1850s, by including the full text of the addresses.

_University of Glamorgan_


M. J. Heale questions the assumptions of both the “consensus” and “conflict” schools in a new historical survey of the United States in the twentieth century. By arguing that the twentieth century was characterized by unprecedented political and social upheaval, Heale challenges the consensus approach. But he is also at variance with the conflict school in contending that Americans, for the most part, remained loyal to the spirit of the US Constitution and the values of individualism and free enterprise that defined the nation from the outset. Heale suggests that the recent history of the United States can be better understood by focussing on the themes of “continuity and change.” The author makes a compelling case for his analytical framework in just over 300 pages of concise prose.

Heale views the history of the “American Century” through the prism of three political orders. The author is keen to emphasize that political and social change in the United States during the last century owed as much to the influence of the “politically powerless” i.e. workers, women and ethnic minorities as to the governing elite in Washington DC. The first political order that Heale considers is the Progressive Era. In this section of the book, the author provides detailed coverage of the social and political reforms of the decade prior to the first World War and the capitalist crisis that culminated in the collapse of progressivism in the late 1920s. The second section of the book describes the rise and fall of the New Deal Order. Heale concludes that the new liberalism that was prevalent in this era was responsible for the unsurpassed degree of government intervention that led to the creation of the New Deal and Great Society programmes. The New Deal consensus crumbled due to the over-extension of American power abroad together with
popular disillusionment with government in the 1960s. In the last section of the book, Heale depicts a country deeply divided over a range of economic, political and social issues in the final third of the century. The polarization of the United States in the Divided Order was not just between political parties, but also between social and religious movements and ethnic groups.

This book will be useful not only to undergraduates seeking to make sense of recent historical events in the United States, but also scholars searching for a convincing framework in which to present the findings of their research.

De Montfort University

IAN JACKSON


America Divided is a well-written overview of a turbulent period. Like other studies, the book treats the sixties as ending in the mid-1970s with economic troubles and the resignation of President Richard Nixon over Watergate. The authors’ central concern is with conflicts over “political philosophy, race relations, gender roles, and personal morality” that became prominent in the 1960s and have been contested ever since. These themes are interwoven into a chronologically organized study that also addresses domestic and foreign policies from Kennedy to Nixon, with an emphasis on the Vietnam War.

The authors argue that liberalism was less strong in the 1960s than contemporaries and its New Left and conservative opponents supposed. Democratic losses in the 1966 congressional elections prevented significant additions to President Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society reform programme, while escalating American involvement in Vietnam diverted Federal funds and contributed to growing economic problems. Heavily dependent on local activism, the revival of conservatism began in the early 1960s. The New Left and the women’s movement also developed though grass-roots mobilization and created mass constituencies. Despite their criticism of American society, adherents of African American equality, women’s rights, the New Left, the counterculture, and environmentalism drew on values that were also embedded in American culture. Whatever their differences, followers of the counterculture, and evangelical and eastern religions shared a desire for meaning and authenticity that increasingly became part of mainstream culture.

This second edition of America Divided is little changed from the first, issued just four years earlier. Several new paragraphs appear. Principally, they extend the examination of youth culture, discuss black consciousness groups, and chronicle Senator Richard Russell’s advice to Johnson in December 1963 and May 1964 to withdraw from Vietnam, and Vice President Hubert Humphrey’s opposition to escalating the war. The conclusion adds references to the 2000 census and the George W. Bush administration. The bibliography has a few additions, but one of the authors Mary L. Duziak is listed as Ovdziak, suggesting a job done in haste.

Although the authors note they have corrected unnamed errors from the first edition, several remain. Elvis Presley is referred to as a Southern Baptist, and, within
some years, the chronology has events out of sequence. Some omissions have not been rectified. Native Americans remain absent beyond the chronology, and Glenn T. Eskew’s provocative interpretation of the Birmingham civil rights campaign in 1963 is neglected.

University of Derby

MARK NEWMAN


President Kennedy, so some of his associates have claimed, would never have escalated American military involvement in Vietnam as his successor in the White House did. Howard Jones began his research into this controversial issue sceptical of this claim, but as his work advanced he was largely converted to the side of the Kennedy admirers. His conversion was not complete because he also concluded that Kennedy never anticipated total withdrawal, only a reduction of American commitment, but the means to this difficult end remained elusive, even more so in the wake of the coup against President Ngo Dinh Diem in which the administration was complicit. Still, Kennedy never gave up on his objective of a phased withdrawal, unlike his successor, who soon put his faith in a military solution. Thus the assassinations of Diem and Kennedy resulted in the “death of a generation.”

The melodramatic title and sub-title of this book trumpet its thesis, but are somewhat misleading as to its content. This is not a tabloid expose but a detailed blow-by-blow account of American policy towards Vietnam between January 1961 and November 1963. Jones has painstakingly trawled through masses of printed and archive sources and has conducted his own interviews with administration officials to produce his 456 pages of text and 80 pages of notes. This is a substantial scholarly study, and while it is hardly the first to claim that Kennedy had a withdrawal plan it does persuasively document Kennedy’s reluctance to commit the US military, his constant search for a non-military solution, and his hopes for a diminution of military support for the South Vietnamese government after his re-election in 1964. And few would disagree that whatever Kennedy would have done, Lyndon Johnson by temperament was not likely to lead a voluntary retreat from Vietnam. Yet the author’s decision to give equal weight (as in his sub-title) to the assassination of Diem as to that of Kennedy in the prolongation of the war points to a difficulty in his thesis. If the post-Diem turbulence in Vietnam undermined Kennedy’s withdrawal strategy (still on the drawing board anyway at the time of his death), one wonders whether Kennedy would have been any more skilful than Johnson in finding a way out. Howard Jones prudently concedes that we cannot know what Kennedy would have done, as he also points to mistakes by his administration that served to deepen American involvement, but he has convinced himself that without those two presidential deaths millions of lives, Vietnamese and American, would have been spared.

Lancaster University

M. J. HEALE
Writing in the late 1980s, Frederic Jameson described conspiracy theory as a degraded form of cognitive mapping, a desperate attempt to make sense of late capitalism. It is a thesis that surfaces again and again in Peter Knight’s collection in which different authors grapple with how we can best understand “the politics of paranoia in postwar America.” Gangsta rap, The X-Files, Don DeLillo’s fiction and other facets of America’s vast machinery of commodification and meaning-production come under critical gaze, and even such a seemingly marginal development as allegations of alien abduction is given analytical importance. Such claims, Bridget Brown suggests, are expressions of anxiety about mass management and manipulation. They express tensions, Jodi Dean argues, around truth and trust. This is a rich and diverse collection, in which Douglas Kellner suggests that The X-Files is part of an explosion of conspiracy thinking in late twentieth century America that combines a rational social critique with a supernaturalism that deflects attention from the real sources of oppression. Dean argues that the only way to achieve a cognitive mapping is through the paranoid narrative of conspiracy theory. United around the significance of conspiracy theory, Knight’s contributors are far from monolithic as to its effects, and as the collection makes clear, the impact is not only upon isolated purchasers of CDs or viewers of TV programmes, but upon groupings that seek to move from a paranoid mapping to the constitution of a paranoid polity.

As Ingrid Fields discusses, one of the most important figures in the world of conspiracy politics is the recently deceased white nationalist, William Pierce. Pierce developed from physics professor to house intellectual for 1960s American neo-nazism and the most influential of late twentieth-century American racists. Pierce believed that a fictional portrayal of a terrorist campaign to bring about a racist new order was the most effective way of disseminating his ideas. He and the organization he led, the National Alliance, achieved particular notoriety when Tim McVeigh, later executed for the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, was found to be an admirer of Pierce’s writing.

Hewitt, while looking at different kinds of terrorism in America, from Puerto Rican and black nationalist to revolutionary leftist to anti-abortionist, says much about as “white racist/Rightist” who, he declares, was responsible for nearly a third of the terrorist incidents between 1954 and 2000, and over half the fatalities. Hewitt is informed and thoughtful about many different forms of violent coercion in furtherance of political or social objectives. Given its timing (Hewitt writes he had almost completed his manuscript before the 11 September attacks), it is understandable that he says little about the shadowy world of militant Islamism. His
treatment of the far right, however, is both substantial and contentious. In a categorization that is regrettably common in writing in the area, Hewitt conflates Pierce, the Ku Klux Klan and those who see America in the grips of an alien conspiracy with others who see America as ruled by its enemies, but refuse to define them racially. Not only are some far rightists inclined to terrorism and others not, but only some of either persuasion are inclined to racism. While Hewitt is often perceptive (for instance, in arguing that the extreme right was not inspired by the Reagan years but frustrated by them), his account would be strengthened by a more systemic distinction between different forms of the far right.

Michael also conflates membership figures for white nationalist groups and militias. However, his work is an exemplar of how the American far right should be studied. Underpinned by extensive interviews and a thorough grounding in both secondary sources and racist publications, Michael explores the organizational and ideological world of those who frame America’s travails through a racial lens. As well as being formidably well informed on Pierce and other leading racists, Michael is distinctive in focussing on the organizations that have been set up to oppose the extreme right. Drawing on interviews with figures in the Anti-Defamation League, Southern Poverty Law Center and other “watchdog” groupings, Michael demonstrates the influence of anti-racist non-governmental organizations on law enforcement in the US while also showing the political differences between groups that pursue such a strategy and those which eschew it. Explicitly rejecting attempts to equate white nationalists with others on the far right, Michael has produced a study which if it has a fault, is to say too little about those who are non-racist. But on white nationalists (and their opponents), Michael’s study is superlative. The interview material is fascinating, from former FBI Assistant Director Buck Revell’s characterization of watchdog groups as “a sort of early warning system” to veteran far rightist conspiracy theorist Willis Carto’s dreams of a left–right alliance. The overall framework, both for its insistence on distinctions within the far right and his concern with how right-wing extremism has been confronted in America, enables him to produce a fine study of both those who espouse and those who oppose the politics of paranoia in American politics.

University of Wolverhampton

MARTIN DURHAM


Karen Isaksen Leonard, a Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Irvine, has produced here a valuable guide to the literature on American Muslims. The book does not aspire to the status of original research, but rather offers itself as an interdisciplinary resource for approaching a subject which deserves much more academic attention than it has previously received. Karen Leonard points out that Islam is probably the fastest growing religion in the US and is “poised to displace Judaism and become second only to Christianity in number of adherents.” Describing herself as a “non-Muslim secular scholar.” Leonard’s prime focus is sociological rather than political. She emphasizes Muslim diversity and concentrates
on the issue of overlapping Muslim and American identities. She traces at some length the tensions between the “lumma,” the universal Muslim community, and the “asabiyya,” or group experience and solidarity. Her study — essentially an extended and learned bibliographical essay — covers topics such as gender, religious observance and the accommodation of Islamic law to American civil and criminal law.

Part of this book’s agenda unquestionably is to emphasize, in the post 11 September era, the openness of the American Muslim tradition and its fruitful relationship with American democratic traditions. Leonard delights in pointing out cultural paradoxes and unlikely cultural juxtapositions. She argues that important aspects of Afghan and Iranian dance and music were preserved by the diasporic populations in the US, when they were suppressed as “un-Islamic” in the homeland. She gives examples of cross-cultural “Islamic-American English.” (An answering machine in the office of a Los Angeles Pakistani Association “begins with ‘Asalam aleikum,’ gives a message in Urdu, and ends in English with, ‘Have an awesome day.’”) Leonard develops the theme that being religious is actually a way of becoming American, linking it to the academic work on Arab Americans in the 1960s by Abdo Elkholy.

_Muslims in the United States_ is well written, very informative and fascinating in its expository detail. Its main weakness is the slight narrowing of perspective imposed by its status as a specialized bibliographical study. There is little in the way of comparative discussion, either in respect of Muslim experiences in other predominantly Christian countries or, indeed, regarding the understanding of better researched immigrant experiences in the US. On the question of immigration, Leonard is at pains to point out that around 10 per cent of African slave “immigrants” into the US were Muslim. She discusses in some detail the immigrant experience of Arab and South Asian Muslims. Here again subtle points are made about complex identities and diversity. Particularly informative are the sections on those Muslim immigrants — such as the transnational Nizari Isma‘ils, the Ahmadis from Pakistan and the stateless Palestinians — who lack a clear homeland identity. In contrast the sections on African American Muslim converts seems a little weak, and certainly does not incorporate discussion of recent academic work on the politics of the movement led by Louis Farrakhan.

Many readers will, understandably, turn to this book for insights into domestic Muslim experiences after 11 September, rather than for a more wide-ranging sociological survey of American Muslim experience. In truth, Leonard really lacks the time perspective to meet these expectations. She mentions recent “hate crimes” against American Muslims and notes some of the more obvious dangers and implications of the “war on terror” for this section of the US population. A chance is missed to chart the battle between Democrats and Republicans for the allegiance of Muslim voters. Leonard argues that the American Muslim reaction to 11 September has most certainly not been one of generally increased radicalization. The onset of the “war on terror,” however, has, as Leonard indicates, stimulated some political realignments, notably in a widening of the gulf between immigrants and African American converts to Islam. Leonard’s book is scholarly, informative and is highly recommended to students of contemporary American ethnicity and religion.
As Lewis notes in his preface, whilst critical commentary on American popular culture continues to expand, the primary sources upon which such scholarly research is founded have largely remained inaccessible. This collection, therefore, makes a very welcome contribution to this field of study and will hopefully stimulate new generations of historians to delve into the full range of diverse and disparate resources that he ably plunders here. The text is organized under eight broad headings: The Dime Museum, Minstrelsy, The Circus, Melodrama, “Leg Show” Burlesque Extravagances, The Wild West Show, Summer Amusement Parks, and Vaudeville. Through these, Lewis provides the reader with a richly contextualized selection of material whose sections include lengthy extracts from performance scripts and lyrics; itineraries, promotional ephemera and photographs; and biographical recollections and original reviews by participants, producers and audiences. In addition, he provides a synoptic and well-referenced introduction to each topic, brief commentary on the selected texts, and a bibliographic essay to conclude the volume.

As an academically admirable primer, then, this book is well worth the price of admission: even as a single volume, it is capable of outshining several of the specialist, but often more descriptive, works in the individual fields. However, it might also arguably be undone by its own emphatic “variety”: a word that is not ill-chosen in this context. As obscure as many of the original sources and collections are, we must surely hope that future generations push beyond this volume’s potential to be a core textbook. Readers should also feel an urgent need for more: for more extensive extracts; more specific examples alongside the summarizing commentary Lewis provides; more material for comparison; for, perhaps, just more of the same. Hopefully, those who engage with this collection are drawn to continue his archival trawling and will develop in greater depth his analyses of the connections and crossovers between different forms of popular entertainment in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Otherwise, those forty pages on Minstrelsy, for example, may feel rather inadequate in their tantalizing presentation of such a highly contentious and complexly fascinating field of cultural practice. Lewis’s great contribution may therefore lie in what this collection encourages future scholars to achieve.

LISA M. RULL

University of Nottingham
place in the evolution of black social thought and activism. Like *Let Nobody Turn Us Around: Voices of Resistance, Reform and Renewal* (2000), *Freedom on My Mind* offers an inclusive, multi-genre collection that attests the richly diverse experience of African Americans in their own words. Personal correspondence, excerpts from slave narratives and autobiographies, pamphlets, significant addresses and speeches, interviews and political manifestos allow us to trace the evolution of African American perspectives, from Benjamin Banneker’s Colonial era to the dislocating complexities of the modern moment.

Marable argues in his trenchant introduction that the key concept behind the long, intricate history of people of African descent in the Americas is the unceasing quest for equality. This anthology chronicles what Marable calls the “subaltern” view of American freedom, an intricately layered narrative of struggle and sacrifice “not from the top down but from the bottom up.” Marable shows that all black literature is political, insofar as it expresses black humanity and subverts the hide-bound, humourless conventions of a bigoted white culture. Through the selections Marable asks how the politics of African American resistance are filtered through gender and sexuality, kinship and community, work and leisure, faith and spirituality.

Although the Black Power movement inspired a number of seminal works in African American studies, it also opened the floodgates to a welter of African American anthologies that generally sidelined the contributions of black woman writers. Marable’s anthology seeks to redress this balance by starting with a chapter on “Women and Gender.” More importantly, the contributions that women have made to African American identity, history and consciousness have been seamlessly woven into the book’s critical fabric.

Marable’s elegantly structured anthology is not devoted to canon formation. Decisions on which documents to include rested primarily upon their significance as cultural artefacts and their ability to illustrate how both continuity and change affected the African American community in terms of its migration, social concerns, class structure, internal quarrels, leadership and protest movements. *Freedom on My Mind*, like other anthologies and edited volumes of this type, has some limitations. Perhaps chief among them is the relative dearth of contemporary sources reflecting the vibrant and iconoclastic culture of the hip-hop generation. However, the considerable strengths of this anthology outweigh these deficiencies. Indeed, the anthology’s third part, entitled ‘Culture, Faith, and Celebration’ brilliantly focusses on the ways that African Americans have addressed the existential imperatives of everyday life in the realms of religion and popular culture.

*University of Glasgow*  

ANDREW RADFORD

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Benjamin Franklin was easily the most distinguished delegate to the Philadelphia Constitutional Convention and was by some distance the oldest man present. Alone among the delegates, he had a career that was not defined by the Revolution. He had been famous for half a century, as a scientist, a writer, a self-made man and as a
politician. He was the foremost American alive – much more prominent in Europe than Washington, let alone Jefferson, Adams or Madison. His life deserves a biography, and of course there have been many. The newest is by Edmund Morgan, as distinguished an historian in his time as Franklin was as a scientist in his time. He has used the voluminous writings left by Franklin to create a compelling picture of the great American polymath. Not surprisingly, given the reliance on a single source, the biography is, as even the author admits, “pretty one-sided.” Morgan presents Franklin as Franklin would himself like to have been presented. His Franklin is wise, virtually always more prescient than anyone else (except for an uncharacteristic bout of pettymindedness in his tussles with proprietary power in mid-century Pennsylvania), excessively public-spirited, gracious and forgiving. Early on, Morgan tells us that “wherever Franklin went people loved him.” This is clearly untrue – his list of enemies, from Thomas Penn in the 1750s to John Adams in the 1780s, was long and distinguished – but it does sum up Morgan’s attitude to his subject. Morgan does capture much of the essence of Franklin and shows why alone of colonial Americans he still captures our attention. Benjamin Franklin was great fun, as Morgan argues, and that fun radiates down the ages.

Nevertheless, Morgan’s portrait is so one-sided and so reliant on Franklin’s own characterization of himself that this cannot be seen as a biography but rather must be viewed as an affectionate apology for Franklin’s life and especially for his public life (Morgan deals only fleetingly with Franklin’s many other interests and hardly deals at all with his sometimes troubled private life). What he does best is to show how Franklin reconciled his lifelong devotion to the cause of British North America as part of a flourishing imperial domain with his late life conversion to the cause of American independence. Here, Franklin does indeed seem to have had a coherent argument. But one suspects that his contemporary Thomas Hutchinson and his illegitimate son, who both remained loyal to the British Crown, saw Franklin’s conversion as treachery. It would be interesting to see Franklin as others saw him, especially from the perspective of those who were immune to his charm and persuasive ways. But because Morgan is so devoted to seeing Franklin as Franklin himself sees himself and because he makes no reference at all to the vast scholarship on early America that might allow for different interpretations of Franklin’s actions and beliefs, these alternative viewpoints are not put to us. For all the virtues of this apology for Franklin, and there are many, this biography lacks balance. A single-sourced biography, no matter how beautifully written and judiciously phrased, cannot give us a full picture of such a complex man.

TREVOR BURNARD

Brunel University


It is surprising that in the half-century since the publication of Invisible Man only a few critics have done full justice to how Ralph Ellison sets the tone and agenda for a politically charged era. However, this new collection of essays – which includes
trenchant contributions from John F. Callahan and Danielle Allen – explores the political implications of a landmark novel with a limpid clarity and rigour that should make it essential reading for Ralph Ellison scholars.

In one of his last public speeches, Ellison exhorted his fellow writers “to take individual responsibility for the health of American democracy” in their literary endeavours. Ellison refined a conception of pluralistic democracy that, as opposed to bounded socio-political systems of power, brooked few frontiers, whether marked by skin pigment or by genes. Lucas E. Morel’s collection probes Ellison’s distinctive and carefully nuanced views on the political tasks and commitments of the novelist, an especially relevant topic as contemporary writers continue to puzzle over the glaring incongruity between American democratic faith and practice.

Morel’s “Prologue” throws into sharp relief the ethical terms of *Invisible Man*; he contends that Ellison’s imaginative quest for eloquent authority rather than the crippled articulation of a repressed people should be perceived as a vital framer of recent American political thought. But these essays are also keenly alert to Ellison’s tone of sophisticated scepticism that makes it difficult to reduce his politics to a platform. It is a measure of *Invisible Man*’s ideological agnosticism that those characters who speak with imperial self-assurance of social panaceas are often found wanting. Though a highly conscious artist who is impassioned about the meaning of his art, Ellison is not a systematic thinker, certainly not one with a blueprint or the hard contours of a programme to realise radical Utopias or pious certainties. The contributors say much about the peculiarly problematic nature of *Invisible Man*’s verbal texture, which mirrors but rarely resolves the intricate political and social ambiguities of African American life.

Ultimately this superb collection enables readers of *Invisible Man* to appreciate the subtleties of its cultural and political commentary, moving them on to ponder how Ellison’s work imbues current debates about eradicating discrimination and flagrant inequality. His belief in America’s basic democratic project is even more urgent in the twenty-first century as a new generation of novelists confront bitter racial divisions and contradictions unimagined during Ellison’s lifetime.

*University of Glasgow*  

ANDREW RADFORD

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The scriptural text, “After this I shall pour out my spirit on all mankind:/ your sons and your daughters will prophesy [sic] ... I shall pour out my spirit in those days even on slaves and slave girls.” Joel 2: 28–29 recurs in the narratives of Jarena Lee, Julia Foote, Maria Stewart, and Frances Joseph Gaudet, forging the unifying link among them and providing author Chanta M. Haywood with the title of this impressive study. Cognizant of the contradictions inherent in their position as black women evangelists in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American society, these four black women preachers interpreted their religious vocations as divine authorization transforming them into “spiritual interrogators of the status quo.”
Haywood first defines prophesying, posits the prophetic writings of these women as a rhetorical literary device and as a political strategy, and argues for the inclusion of religious writing in the black female literary tradition. In successive chapters she contends that social distrust and denigration of black people in public arenas and the cult of domesticity required these black women preachers to politicize their conversion experiences and to recast them in the Pauline tradition in order to legitimize their authority to preach. In her persuasive exegesis on the trope of travel, Haywood establishes that in undertaking itinerant preaching these women both journeyed toward spiritual perfection and prophetically challenged the logical binarisms of the social restrictions of race, class, and gender. She next demonstrates how in their prophetic readings of Scripture, black women preachers challenged prevailing interpretations of the Bible that devalued black people and women. Haywood then focusses on Frances Joseph Gaudet as a transitional figure bridging the gap between the religious proselytizing of black women preachers and the social welfare issues “race women” addressed.

Finally, Haywood constructs a theory of prophesying whose formative elements include the appropriation of Biblical language to protest current social or political situations, contestation and alternative interpretation of religious ideology supporting oppression, and attenuation of the distinctions between the religious and the secular. She then applies this theory to a reading of Harriet Jacobs’s narrative, “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl.” Haywood succeeds in excerpting isolated passages from the Jacobs narrative which meet her first two theoretical criteria. However, neither Jacobs’s life nor her integral text replicates the primacy of religion, the personal conversion experience, or the ministerial vocation so dominant in both the lives and the texts of the black women preachers presented in this work, rendering Haywood’s third theoretical criterion problematic. Nevertheless, Haywood has produced a fine work that contributes significantly to literary and religious scholarship.

University of Georgia  
DIANE BATTS MORROW


Heather S. Nathans’ book *Early American Theatre from the Revolution to Thomas Jefferson* focusses on the development of theatres in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia during the late eighteenth century to argue that the American theatre following the Revolution reflected differing and oppositional notions of nationalism rather than being the product of a coherent and unified nationalism.

The first two chapters discuss the strong anti-theatre sentiments that prevailed in colonial America which prevented theatres from having much legitimacy. Prior to the American Revolution, theatre was often associated with Great Britain. Anti-theatre factions, to give themselves an authoritative voice, therefore identified their views with patriotism. After the Revolution, however, the urban elite believed they could employ the theatre as a venue for embedding notions of republican virtue into
the public culture. In this way, they helped establish the legitimacy of theatre in America.

Nathans uses very rich primary material to argue that during the 1790s the cultural authority of the elite was challenged by parties and classes at the theatre. While prior to the Revolution newspapers were forums for debate about the validity of theatre itself, following the Revolution newspapers became forums for debate about what should be shown at the theatre. The author also examines prompt books to highlight the difficulty theatre managers had in appealing to a wide audience when the American public was so divided. To attract both pro-British and anti-British city dwellers following the controversial Jay’s Treaty, for example, managers re-wrote their favourite British plays to eliminate any “English taint” (p. 87).

Nathans sees the “Jeffersonian Revolution” as marking a turning point in the history of the American theatre because theatres were no longer rocked with political and social divisions. The argument here, in the final section of her last chapter, is much less convincing, and ultimately unsatisfying. The discussion on the Jeffersonian era is over-generalized and lacks the type of rich details included in earlier chapters. Nathans concentrates her attention on the plays produced rather than what made the rest of the book so fascinating – the relationship between the American socio-political climate to the theatre itself.

Nathans’ main thesis is also somewhat overstated. In examining the relationship between early American theatre and nationalism, she underplays the desire among the urban elite, particularly in New York, to establish local cultural institutions for civic purposes unrelated to nationalism.

That said, scholars interested in the history of the early American theatre, and the impact of social and political forces on its development, will find much here of interest.


The new book by Daniel T. O’Hara, professor of English at Temple University and review editor of the journal boundary 2, takes its stand against what it calls “the debilitating effects of globalization on the university in general and the field of literary studies in particular.” O’Hara makes the compelling point that many academic humanists who write about globalization lack expertise in “social sciences, government agencies, and the new media,” and he argues that attempting to discuss globalization with such blinkers is as foolish as writing “an essay on Shakespeare without checking out all of the relevant scholarship.” O’Hara covers a lot of ground, moving from discussions of critics such as Edward Said and Stanley Fish to acerbic critiques of what he calls “powerbook radicals” and the ways in which universities have begun to operate like transnational corporations, mirroring the dynamics of globalization in their attempts to accumulate intellectual and economic capital. Empire Burlesque is generally incisive on these institutional issues, and it also has a
good chapter on Foucault, describing how the Frenchman’s later work on aesthetics has generally been overlooked by American followers more intent upon appropriating him to underwrite their own interest in various forms of identity politics.

There are, however, several aspects of this book which seem less convincing. One is its hotchpotch quality: many of the pieces here have been published separately before, and the author appears frequently to have added a few sentences at the end of each chapter in an attempt to link his specific analysis more closely to the theme of global America; in the case of the chapter on Freud, for instance, the strain of this strategy becomes all too apparent. Another difficulty is O’Hara’s penchant for a discourse of self-parody, whereby he participates performatively in the very phenomenon he is describing. Although from a theoretical perspective this serves to exemplify his point about being unable to get outside the all-encompassing global monster, it also vitiated the force of his critique by licensing a certain stylistic self-indulgence which empowers the author both to have his cake and eat it, as at the beginning of chapter eleven where he addresses his own previous academic interventions by relating them implicitly to the absurdist model that provides the overarching frame for his analysis, “global America as empire burlesque.” More fundamentally, O’Hara’s persistent nostalgia for “the kind of aesthetico-ethical criticism that globalization would appear to have superseded” (ix) leads him here to idealize Henry James, in particular, as an author of the old school committed to “the passionate pleasure of being fully alive.” Although O’Hara’s close readings of James are frequently perceptive and illuminating, as a general argument this seems the weakest section of the book, since the idea that a global James is by definition any more or less legitimate than a queer James or a formalist James is surely absurd. O’Hara’s crusty lampooning of the idea of “a grand conference in Sun City, South Africa, on Henry James and globalization” only suggests where the ideological limits of his own critical practice as a “personal ethical struggle for meaning between author and reader” actually lie. The structural flaw of this thesis may be its insistence on treating globalization and literary form as polar opposites, rather than being willing also to consider how they might converge and coalesce in interesting ways. So while there are many pertinent local observations in this book, its overall argument seems too ostentatiously cantankerous to be entirely convincing.

Rothermere American Institute, Oxford University


“Barnes’s works are not particularly about character. Her protagonists resemble silhouettes or marionettes, who present angular and impenetrable exteriors. Often bizarre and emotionally or physically abusive, and frequently involved in mysterious relationships of strange intensity, they seem to respond to forces which remain inaccessible to the reader.” Thus, Deborah Parsons provides us with the most succinct and most accurate summary we have of Djuna Barnes’s modernism—a modernism where the grotesque and the outcast, figures of emotional and social
deformity and transgressors of boundaries of all kinds, are seen to present possibilities of resistance to contemporary aesthetic, cultural, and sexual policing. And it is a modernism forged out of a sense of life as brutal and violating where the principal means of quite often savage defence are the weapons of satire and the dangerous havens of marginality in a depiction (both anxiously celebratory and uncomfortably cautious) of the “liminality and disordered bodies of Europe’s social outcasts.” Parsons is quite wonderful in the economy of her insightfulness, filling the brief span of this admirable addition to the “Writers and Their Work” series with resonant précis – noting, for example, “Barnes’s keen eye for the theatricality of modernity and the performances of everyday life, an empathy with the outcast, the queer and the unacceptable, and a cynicism towards modern humanity.” More radical than Wyndham Lewis, of whom something similar could be said (Parsons, oddly, neglects an instructive comparison), Barnes emerges as particularly problematic and unassimilatable for most literary histories; in large part I suspect, in consequence of what Parsons sees as her “expertise in writing at once for and against the values of her audience.”

Parsons is keen especially to liberate Barnes from that reductionist feminist criticism which seems oblivious to the subtleties of this “expertise” in confining her to essentialist categories such as “lesbian.” Parsons provides substantial and perceptive accounts of Ryder, Nightwood, and The Antiphon, but it is in her discussion of the Ladies Almanack that her liberating thrust is at its most pertinent. Having maintained throughout a strong case for Barnes’s “fluid sexuality,” Parsons finds in the Almanack a barrenness of conventional heterosexuality (largely through its expression of patriarchal control and the circumscriptions of reproduction) set against a lesbianism that “allows for the pleasures and the bloom of female desire,” but she shows persuasively also that “to read the Almanack as a lesbian novel is to delimit the very disruption that it performs in refusing sexual polarisation.” Hence, the novel displays “flexible bisexuality rather than fixed lesbianism” which concurs and critiques simultaneously, and it is precisely here that we can locate the subversion and the radicalism of Barnes’s enterprise.

University of Keele

Richard Pipes stands a representative example of that group – currently enjoying so much media attention – known as the neo-conservatives. Indeed, in this memoir, he provides a first-hand account of many of the issues that pushed the neo-conservatives farther to the right and away from the Democratic Party, such as the death of Henry “Scoop” Jackson, the Team B Report, and the Committee for the Present Danger. His book, though, is more than just an account of those events. In fact, he dwells on three aspects of his life, around which the book is organized: his experiences as a child and youth in Poland, Italy and America; at Harvard, as both a student and a teacher, and in Washington, as Ronald Reagan’s specialist in East European and Soviet Affairs. Pipes has some interesting and insightful things to say...
about academia (‘His [the scholar’s] principal criterion of success is approval of peers. This means that he must cultivate them, which makes for conformity and “group think.”’). And of George H. W. Bush he writes, “Lack of political courage was his outstanding weakness: it would stamp his presidency with the brand of mediocrity.” However, for me the most interesting element of Vixi was to see how Pipes defended his record on the Soviet Union. As late as 1990, writing in Commentary, Pipes had difficulty telling whether the Soviet Union was “breaking up” or “cracking down.” He gave no sense that the Soviet Union was in serious internal crisis. Given that Pipes got it so wrong about the break-up of the Soviet Union, I wondered how he would recall those events here. He writes that in 1987 he said that the USSR was “unraveling” and then quickly moves on to condemn the entire Sovietology community: “after the events of 1991 had proven their analyses incorrect, they did not bother to find out what had gone wrong in order to avoid repeating their mistakes. They shut their ears to any alternative point of view. They pretended to be disinterested, yet they had a considerable stake in depicting the Soviet Union as a powerful yet reasonable rival …” It is a stroke of masterly evasion for Pipes and his neo-conservative friends were guilty of the same and yet he does not condemn them (or himself). Thus, Vixi merely confirms the impression that memoirs, particularly those emanating from the intellectual world, are often self-serving these days.

University of Southampton

NATHAN ABRAMS


Going Places is a personalized history of changing patterns of transport in the twentieth century American West. Rooted firmly in developments in the first half of the century, the story is brought up-to-date primarily with planes and trains. Ironically the car and its flexibility shaped the lives of most westerners in these years, but the history of the auto is difficult to analyse because its use is so individualistic. Road construction, aided by government funding, road organizations and tourism provide helpful frameworks on which to hang auto themes. However, they do not say how Farmer Jones used his Model T in the 1920s and 1930s or why the suburban Los Angeles resident chose a long daily commute on congested highways in the 1970s and 1980s.

Carlos Schwantes is blessed with a long memory, wide travelling experiences and a huge collection of wonderful photographs, all of which he uses judiciously throughout this well-produced and written volume. His anecdotes lighten the tone of what might be considered more turgid information on rail and road construction, flight paths, plane types and federal regulation. But there are many interesting points that deserve all historians’ attention. For those who romanticize trains, only first-class passengers travelled in comfort. Others endured wooden benches in grimy and over-crowded cars. As with buses, the poor conditions of trains during the Second World War left an indelible memory on a generation who failed to return to public
transport. Cars may have become the most popular mode of travel in the twentieth century, but poor road conditions made even local movement difficult until sufficient government money, whether from petrol taxes, car licence fees or “Uncle Sam’s” concerns about defence stimulated modern “auto euphoria.” Air transport, like motor transport owed much to government funding. With its positive and at times sexy image as well as the advantages of speed for long-distance journeys it soon paired up with the car to become the West’s regular mobility duo.

A history of transport in the modern West is long overdue. Far too much attention has been paid to the nineteenth century, to the nation as a whole and to the train. The demographic axis has shifted to the Pacific and speed and flexibility are requisites of modern American living. Together the car and the plane have conquered the vast spaces of the West, more so in the second half of the twentieth century. It is a pity, however, that the role of the Federal government and the concept of “public interest” have been identified so negatively because deregulation has become the new conservative god. Competition and the ‘me’ mindset rules American access to transport despite environmental waste, gross consumption rates and weakening of communal values. For such reasons the redefinition of the conquest of the modern West may need to be revisited at some future date.

MARGARET WALSH

University of Nottingham


The sexuality of Harlem Renaissance writers continues to be a controversial issue into the twenty-first century. This is most clearly demonstrated by Arnold Rampersad’s rebuttal of his trenchant and sometimes vituperative critics in the afterword to the new edition (2002) of the second volume of his magisterial biography I Dream a World where he describes Langston Hughes as not homosexual but probably “asexual.” Christa Shwarz navigates this contentious minefield with great aplomb using close textual analysis of the works of Bruce Nugent, Claud Mckay, Countee Cullen and Langston Hughes “revealing subtexts so far ignored.” She shows how “explicit sexuality” rather than specific “homosexual orientation” was the defining mood of Harlem establishments and that Alain Locke was a crucial figure in homosocial and homosexual networks. She describes how the burden of representation was an “issue against which these writers were constantly forced to define themselves.” However, this burden was mediated by strategies of sexual dissidence that enabled their rejection of purely racialized conceptions of identity.

Shwarz skilfully highlights Cullen’s gay voice over a variety of poems that juxtaposes with his adoption by conservative black Americans and sentimental white Americans. On Hughes Shwarz, following, but nuancing Rampersad, is more judicious. Her perception that “Hughes was able to give veiled indications of same-sex desire while operating within a heterosexual framework” uses textual evidence to show that the term “asexual” might be too limiting for a full reading of Hughes’s identity. However, Hughes’s fraternal relation to Walt Whitman and especially to Leaves of Grass hardly constitutes “evidence” for a gay reading of the work. Mckay’s
case is more straightforward but it is again textual strategies that Shwarz uses as evidence to show gay readings of his work for he is shown to “intentionally leave gaps allowing for gay readings in his otherwise straight narratives.” She contrasts McKay’s more proletarian mode with Nugent’s aristocratic homosexual characters and themes showing that the gay voices of the Harlem Renaissance are multivarious covering a wide spectrum of experience and expression. Schwarz’s conclusion that the “subject matter of race by no means subordinated the topic of same sex desire” during the Harlem Renaissance is borne witness to by the wealth of evidence in this thought-provoking and thoroughly researched monograph.

University of Central Lancashire

ALAN RICE


Plunging the reader into a demimonde of gangsters, gamblers, hustlers, and showgirls, Daniel Schwartz’s Broadway Boogie Woogie delivers a comprehensive and compelling study of Damon Runyon, one of the most underrated popular American writers of the twentieth century. Tabloid journalist, prolific short-story writer, and occasional poet, Runyon was remarkable for the diversity, quantity, and popularity of his work. Though largely forgotten today, this chronicler of New York City was made famous in the 1930s and 40s by his “Broadway stories,” which explored the swanky nightlife and seedy underbelly of Manhattan. Significantly, Runyon did not just write about this showbiz/gangster nether world, he interacted with it too. Among his acquaintances, for instance, were the mobster Al Capone, the prize fighter Jack Dempsey, and the baseball legend Babe Ruth. But Runyon is perhaps best known today for his unlikely contribution to the Broadway stage. His story “The Idyll of Sarah Brown” is what became the hit musical (and later the hit film) Guys and Dolls.

One of the definite highlights of Broadway Boogie Woogie is the way Schwartz skillfully combines literary criticism, biography, and cultural history to shed light not only on the subtle complexities of Runyon’s prose, but also on the interwoven urban cultures of underground New York. Another welcome feature is that Schwartz situates Runyon’s writing alongside and in the context of the New York narratives of writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald, the urban iconography of photographers like Alfred Stieglitz, and the cityscapes of painters like Joan Sloan. Schwartz argues throughout that Runyon is “a significant figure in American culture” (p. 317), and that his writing played a pivotal role in shaping “the double image of New York as a romantic, exciting, and glamorous place with an unwholesome dark and dangerous edge” (p. 2). Schwartz’s detailed analysis of Runyon’s extensive range of journalism and fiction, supplemented by careful consideration of Runyon’s impact on popular culture, certainly bears this out. Among other things, Schwartz demonstrates how Runyon set in motion what has come to be known as “gangster chic.”

In his conclusion, Schwartz goes so far as to suggest that Runyon even helped to define the aggressive and flamboyant “New York style” evident in such recent
productions as Sex and the City, Seinfeld, The Sopranos, and the films of Woody Allen and Spike Lee. This claim may sound like somewhat of an exaggeration, but in the light of the preceding discussions it is entirely earned. And given such an enduring legacy, it is clear that the multifarious figure of Damon Runyon deserves renewed critical attention of the sort provided by Schwartz. Broadway Boogie Woogie is eminently readable, thoroughly engaging, and significantly extends existing scholarship on the popular cultural history of modern New York.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth

CHRISTOPH LINDNER


It was impossible when reading this impressively researched and written account of LBJ’s European policies to resist the notion that it constitutes “Johnson Revisionism.” Despite the subtitle, Schwartz’s book strives to remove transatlantic relations from the lowering presence of the war. There is no hidden-hand Presidential direction of policy here. Johnson emerges as dynamic, energetic, involved, dominant. He insisted in 1968 that Clark Clifford resist pressure for troop cuts, taking a “‘hard, hard, hard line that there would be no cutting of forces in Europe by even one man during his administration’” (p. 216). European leaders felt the full force of the Johnson treatment. A revised view of Johnson emerges from his dealings with France. He comes over as much more sophisticated than his detractors at the time and since would have had us believe. When De Gaulle was obliged by the political and economic developments of 1968 to desist from anti-American economic policies and seek US support, Johnson resisted the temptation to exact revenge for previous slights. Schwartz’s Johnson used his staff wisely, would brook contradiction (if loyally expressed) and was sensitive to other countries’ needs and conditions; in Europe anyway. The caricature of the bullying Texan foreign policy novice, incapable of effective diplomacy finds few echoes here.

Schwartz presents a detailed account of impressive achievements over issues Johnson’s predecessors had found intractable. These were, interestingly, clinched in 1967–68, not 1964–66. They were the result of presidential engagement with complex policy issues. Johnson’s management of German nuclear ambitions and his successful conclusion of an NPT that included West Germany, allowed Euratom a meaningful role, and satisfied Soviet concerns, leads Schwartz plausibly to argue that this represents a greater step forward than Kennedy’s partial test ban treaty. The NPT formed part of a wider pattern of efforts to change the Cold War, minimize the chances of nuclear war, and build better relations with the USSR that bore significant fruit despite the Vietnam conflict. Similarly in currency politics, on troop levels in Europe and the related matter of the West German offset payments, on the Kennedy Round of GATT talks, and on NATO’s future, the administration secured significant gains that Eisenhower and Kennedy had sought, but not secured.

Yet these issues do end up having to be discussed within the context of the book’s subtitle. Vietnam did cast a shadow over relations with Europe. It did cause problems
with De Gaulle, Wilson, and Kosygin. Perhaps in the first two instances these were not as great as has sometimes been suggested, but they were significant. Schwartz deploys a wealth of data on political and economic diplomacy to show that the war did not cause the diplomatic and economic problems with which the administration wrestled, ultimately rather successfully. It did, however, exacerbate them. The tax rise and trade policies may have succeeded markedly in balancing the trade and budget deficits, but the war was a catalyst at least in the way it provoked the sense of crisis that Johnson exploited to achieve his aims. The shadow remains.

This is an impressive and important contribution to Johnson scholarship. One flaw is evident. It is shared with too much scholarship on transatlantic relations. There was (and is) more to Europe than France and Germany. Britain and the USSR do feature prominently, but somewhat separate from “Europe.” France and the Federal Republic are left to define the continent. There are only glimpses of roles played by other countries. The glimpses (Harmel was Belgian) with regard to NATO, central bankers, the EEC, or trade talks, are suggestive. Schwartz has delivered an excellent monograph that revises orthodox ideas on Johnson and the USA. Once historians learn that there is more to “Europe” than France and Germany (and a semi-detached UK), we will all benefit from an even richer appreciation of transatlantic affairs that can emerge from the shadow of Vietnam.

Selwyn College, University of Cambridge

MIKE SEWELL


The message implicit in Nick Selby’s Reader’s Guide to Walt Whitman is that there are almost as many Whitmans as there are critics: among others, we see Walt the Transcendentalist band, Walt the good g(r)ay poet, and a writer complicit with the hegemonic forces shaping the United States in the mid nineteenth century. As such, more attention could have been devoted to a consideration of which “reader” this book is aimed at. Although some of the “Early Reviews” are wonderfully accessible and witty, and Charles Eliot Norton’s 1855 essay is a delight, much of the more recent criticism is decidedly tricky, demanding a reasonably sophisticated understanding of theoretical issues. As such, I suspect that Selby pitches some of his assumptions about his reader too low: do we really need to be told that Pound and Lawrence were “both associated with the modernist movement,” or to be provided with translations of the simplest Latin phrases? Although Selby’s own commentaries offer lucid contextualization of the critical materials, the gap between the implied reader here and the one expected to tackle the extracts is large.

At his best, Selby demonstrates that he is a shrewd and informed critic of Whitman scholarship—he provides detailed examinations of the problems with Charles Feidelson and Robert K. Martin’s assessments, and balanced summaries of the contexts of American Renaissance and The American Adam. It’s a pity, therefore, that so many of the essays are left relatively unscrutinized, since I suspect that more
consistent critical interrogation would be just what the reader of this collection would find most useful.

Finally, the bibliography brings together much of the best-known Whitman scholarship from 1855 to the present, but (almost inevitably given the sheer volume of materials from which to select) omits key works. From the early twentieth century, there is no Van Wyk Brooks; from the mid, no C. L. R. James, whose understanding of what Selby calls Whitman’s “complicity with a coercive Americanist ideological agenda” (138) predates those of Karen Sanchez-Eppler and Allen Grossman by almost half a century. Of recent scholarship, it is odd that Betsy Erkkila (surely the pre-eminent Whitman scholar of recent years) is only present as an editor, and that no mention is made of Miles Orvell and Richard Gravil, scholars who have broadened our understanding of Walt’s relationship to popular culture and Transatlantic relations respectively.

CHRISTOPHER GAIR

University of Birmingham


M. N. S. Sellers has provided us with a concise and precise book, comprised of fifteen discourses about aspects of republican legal theory. In this treatise of politico-legal theory set within its historical context, namely the republican tradition from Cicero to modern sages, Sellers’ main goal is to offer intellectual armor to republican scholars as well as practitioners – lawyers and politicians. Sellers defines “republicanism” (according to John Adams the most misunderstood word in the English language) as a doctrine of liberty, achieved through the subjection to law, in which the state serves the common good of the citizens. Accordingly, republican legal theory in Sellers’ scheme works out the laws and constitutions that best serve the common good, creating the polity as “an empire of laws and not of men.” Through the histories of Rome and lesser republics the millennia of old republican tradition provides a constitutional prescription for securing the polity “through popular sovereignty, elected executives, and an independent senate” (p. 10). Thus, republican legal theory suggests a system of “freedom through government, to secure a shared sense of justice, in pursuit of the common good” (p. 15).

Sellers’ argument is polemical indeed: republicanism is good; liberalism and democracy (i.e. popular sovereignty) by themselves are not good enough. Discussing issues varying from group rights to legal history, he demonstrates once and again the superiority of a republican mode of reflection and decision-making. The sections concerning the American republic will be of great interest to the Journal’s readers. The United States, Sellers points out, fashioned itself early on as a classical republic with “a new ‘Senate’ [which] would meet on the ‘Capitol’ hill, over looking the ‘Tiber’ river as in Rome” (p. 16). The Constitution established a federacy of republican states to serve the common good of the people of the United States. The Constitution, an admirable classical document of “mixed government” has its faults, though. The difficulty of amendment, the vagueness of the guarantee clause, and the
weakness of the judiciary, are attributed to “the baleful tradition of slavery, and Southern attempts to protect it” (p. 119). Securing the republic, Sellers believes, will require a constant recurrence to first principles, to the wisdom of Roman legislators and magistrates.

Reading this elegant and historically conscious treatise, one wonders though how would have Sellers’ Roman heroes relate to his modern depiction of the pursuit of the common good. Republican Rome, a hyper-militaristic, aristocratic and slave-holding society, perceived both the “common” and the “good” in a radically different way than twenty-first century republicans, such as Sellers, do. Nevertheless, Sellers has produced an intelligent, learned, and much needed analysis of republican legal systems, which could teach lawyers and politicians the origins and meanings of their republican notions, and provide theorists a well-constructed argument to wrestle with.

Johns Hopkins University

ERAN SHALEV


During the past four decades, as the author of more than thirty books of essays, fiction, and poetry, Wendell Berry has become one of America’s most respected intellectuals and environmentalists. In this thoughtful and well-balanced critical analysis of his ideas, Kimberly K. Smith, a professor of political science at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, synthesizes Berry’s views, weaving them together into a coherent agrarian philosophy. Preferring the term “intellectual tradition” to “ideology,” she sees Berry as more of a conservative than a liberal but shows in considerable detail how he embodies strands of both political persuasions. A great strength of her study is the way in which she confidently navigates the complexities of Berry’s thought, showing time and again his awareness of the difficulties, contradictions, and limitations that characterize human efforts to comprehend the world they live in and to formulate solutions to the problems that face them.

Born in rural Kentucky in 1934, Wendell Berry taught English briefly at New York University before returning to his roots to join the faculty at the University of Kentucky and to take up farming with horses. The author does not go into any biographical detail about his intellectual development as a sixties radical except to say that he was one. Instead, her task is to show how his ideas fit into the long historical development of agrarian and environmental thinking over the course of two centuries and then to explicate in some detail his social theory, which argues that an ecologically healthy and sustainable agriculture requires a viable rural community of small farmers; his ethical theory, which criticizes individualism and consumerism and urges a new moral ideal, which he calls “grace” and which embodies virtues such as propriety, fidelity, and an awareness of limits and his political theory, which criticizes our contemporary form of politics and calls for a more decentralized democracy.
In distilling, organizing, and contextualizing Berry’s writings, Smith performs a valuable intellectual service. Leaving to future scholars the task of delineating how Berry’s ideas may have changed over time, she demonstrates the depth and relevance of his ideas, taken as a whole. Drawing upon thinkers as diverse as Thomas Jefferson, Henry David Thoreau, the Nashville Agrarians, the Populists, Harry Caudill, Liberty Hyde Bailey, Ralph Borsodi, and Carey McWilliams, Berry has fashioned an ecological agrarianism that focuses upon the impact of agriculture on the environment more than upon social and political institutions. The Kentuckian is a key figure in what Smith refers to as “the greening of environmentalism.”

Finding much to admire in Berry’s vision, Smith does not hesitate to call into question particular elements of it. His political theory is much less developed than his social and moral theories, she believes. She questions one of his central premises – that small-scale farmers are necessarily more environmentally sensitive than large-scale ones. His vision of the good life, she contends, remains incomplete without a more persuasive analysis of how leisure fits into it. And she raises other questions. All in all, however, Smith finds great power and value in Berry’s views, and her book becomes required reading for anyone interested in understanding ecology, agrarianism, and Berry’s contributions to them.

JOHN E. MILLER
South Dakota State University


To me, the unexpectedly warm days that may come in the fall as the last reminder of summer and as a comfort before the oncoming winter are called “Brittsommar,” since they often coincide with “Britt” or “Birgitta,” the calendar name on 7 October. To Adam Sweeting, the author of Beneath the Second Sun: A Cultural History of Indian Summer, the corresponding period is called “Indian Summer”; it takes place one month later, in the beginning of November, and it is situated in New England.

Sweeting also locates “Indian summer” in historical time and includes it in a period from 1782, when Crèvecoeur first used the term in an essay, to 1886, the year when Emily Dickinson died. This is what he calls “the century of Indian summer.” He explains the seemingly incommensurable starting and ending points: even if this warm weather was previously recognized as a meteorological phenomenon, it was not named in writing before Crèvecoeur. At the other end of the century, the conclusive literary elaboration of the concept was fulfilled by Dickinson, Sweeting argues. After her, what remained was cliché. To underline Dickinson, the title of the book also alludes to her poetry: “A – Field of Stubble, lying sere/Beneath the second Sun –.”

It is Sweeting’s aim to explore the cultural construction of “Indian summer,” to reconcile its usages as “a sentimental touchstone and a transcendental icon, a meteorologist’s whipping boy and a poet’s best friend.” He does so through chapters about the historical origin of the concept, about its relation to science and sentiment in nineteenth-century popular culture, about the white adaptation of the Indian
reference, and about the conflation of Indian summer weather and the establishment of New England literature. For the literary adoptions, Sweeting devotes one chapter to “Indian summer” in Thoreau’s nature descriptions and one chapter to Dickinson’s use of the poetic motif.

Beneath the Second Sun is published in a series called “Revisiting New England: The New Regionalism” and appears to be intended for a reader with a soft spot for New England and the nineteenth century. It is a safe book which does not confront or challenge a traditional view of “Indian summer” and its location in nineteenth-century New England. Sweeting confirms a literary New England not dissimilar to that of Barrett Wendell exactly one hundred years earlier: “the simple, hopeful literature of the inexperienced, resurgent New England” (435). Sweeting uses Hobsbawm’s term “the invented tradition,” not to discuss “Indian summer” in New England, but to corroborate a universalized regional tradition, which restricts the value of his broad information and insight.

Mid-Sweden University

ANDERS OLSSON


Vidal immortalized the fragile quality of the early Republic and the shadowy characters of its leaders in his novel Burr. A return to the era is welcome, especially given his parallel aim of showing the links between the problems of that period and the failings of the present administration, which latter Vidal forcefully assaulted in his recent volumes of essays. Vidal’s attempted subject is admirable; it is to be regretted that he does not quite succeed in bringing it off.

The problematic narrative of the book is a key factor. Indeed the book at times threatens to become a recital of all our well-loved stories of and quotations from the period. Thus, we plunge directly into a discussion of Washington’s perilous financial situation in 1786, and proceed erratically through a broad brush narrative of the history of the republic to the election of 1800, with the occasional foray beyond (to the Louisiana Purchase). The chronology is loose and Vidal fails to offer a compelling substitute argument supporting his placing of material. Instead Vidal musingly re-evaluates his three main subjects (with some reference to Hamilton, Franklin and others), in judgements which, while often beautifully and accurately put, lose impact by their disjointed presentation. In parallel, Vidal slashes at their unworthy contemporary successors, in corrosive and entertaining assaults which have an unfortunate tendency to depart so far from his main narrative as to verge upon the polemical.

It is the portrait of Jefferson which proves the most striking reassessment, given his fate in Burr. Vidal now sees him as the champion of the liberties threatened, in their worst crime, by the present administration. In a book which denounces the tendency of historians to give too sunny a picture of the period (31) it is disconcerting to find Vidal giving so sunny a picture of Jefferson, especially when John Adams is lambasted for the same crime, marked by his signature of the Alien and
Sedition Acts. Here, as elsewhere, Vidal’s over-broad narrative makes for too clear cut a picture. These flaws are frustrating because the blows that Vidal does land indicate convincingly that there is a compelling comparison to be drawn between the two periods, one which will be grounded in a more fluent argument and better use of the evidence. These qualities are the more necessary in an era when political polemics misusing the historical past are ever more prevalent. Much of Vidal’s book is elegant, witty and entertaining but this sharpest dagger ultimately misses its mark.

University of Edinburgh

FINN POLLARD


One of the most important things that many Europeans seem not to “get” about the United States is the power and pervasiveness of religion. Far more Americans than the citizens of most European countries believe in God, attend church more or less regularly, and take religious teachings seriously in making personal and political decisions. Also particularly American is a penchant for evangelical religion, namely that which stresses the authority of the Bible, personal conversion, missionary outreach to others and, frequently, the imminence of the second coming of Jesus to earth. Although most of these emphases have European and especially British origins – “dispensational premillennialism,” the most common theological basis for the notion that Jesus will return soon, originated in 1840s England – the place where they have taken root and flourished most extravagantly is the United States.

A distinctively American spin on the evangelical tradition is pentecostalism, the origins of which are the theme of Grant Wacker’s authoritative study. Pentecostalism, which in its modern form originated in Topeka, Kansas, at the turn of the twentieth century, grew in considerable measure out of the earlier Holiness movement, which in turn grew out of Wesleyan Methodism. Pentecostalism, however, was in its early phases an all-American phenomenon, emerging in the national heartland, rapidly spreading throughout the South and West, and both reflecting and shaping a distinctive culture, which is the subject of Wacker’s investigation.

Wacker’s method of dealing with pentecostalism, which shaped his own personal background profoundly, can best be described as phenomenological, that is, an attempt to lay out as clearly and completely as possible the components of the early pentecostal experience. His chapter titles consist of one word each, which lay out a basic aspect of that experience. The first group of chapters – temperament, tongues, testimony, authority, cosmos, worship – focus specifically on religion, while the remainder – rhetoric, customs, leaders, women, boundaries, society, nation, war, destiny – are more socially oriented. In fleshing these out, Wacker has delved deeply into the vast and largely ephemeral collection of documents churned out by early Pentecostals. His interpretation reflects a variety of disciplinary approaches – psychological, sociological, ethnological – but is never to closely wedded to any single methodological stance, and he avoids disciplinary jargon, perhaps to excess at times.
When undertaking a Weberian analysis, one need not strive to avoid words like “charisma.” On the whole, though, the readability that results compensates amply for any omissions.

Wacker’s propensity to describe rather than to judge or even explain also shows up in the later, more historically oriented sections of his work. Wacker sets out to refute an older tendency to write off Pentecostals and other “radical evangelicals” – a phrase he uses to good descriptive effect – as either the economically disinherited or as simply loonies. He largely succeeds in this, drawing on demographic data to place them squarely in the middle- to lower-middle-class range of American society. He notes that, unlike many others in their social and geographical setting, Pentecostals generally eschewed Populism, and politics in general, even though their own culture was profoundly populist. He does not, however, try to explain why this was so, perhaps wisely recognizing the futility of such explanations.

Wacker’s on-going schema, reflected in his book’s title, is that Pentecostalism can best be understood as an on-going dialectic between primitivism and pragmatism, “otherworldly aspiration and this-worldly shrewdness.” While Pentecostals sincerely believed that the revival of the gifts of the Holy Spirit – healing by faith and speaking in tongues most prominent among them – that they were experiencing literally translated them back into the time of origin of apostolic Christianity, they also continued to function quite effectively in the here-and-now of early twentieth century America. They sought to navigate an unstable social order in a time of rapid change by continually triangulating their positions at once with heaven and with earth. As such, they were like most other Americans – only more so. How they survived the effervescence and instability of the early years to resurface as a major force in post-1960s America – in the person, for example, of John Ashcroft, the first Pentecostal to be elected to the US Senate – is a story which still awaits telling. In the meantime, we can be grateful to Grant Wacker for giving us a plausible narrative of their emergence.

Miami University

PETER W. WILLIAMS


Editing and contributing to a historical companion to twentieth-century America must necessarily be daunting, fraught with risk. Attempting to trace the history of any specific trend, time or place over the expanse of an entire century in a nation’s lifetime is just as problematic as the task of selecting which trends, times and places merit inclusion and examination – and yet this is what this volume (part of the Blackwell Companions to American History series) seeks to do. In his introduction, Stephen J. Whitfield devotes less time to explaining the book’s structure and content and more time to suggesting ways in which the book might be read – he explains that it should tell us about the development of the great American themes of abundance and freedom, particularly with regard to how competing desires for freedom and order interplay. He concludes by saying that though the book seeks to
challenge its readers, these readers bear the privilege or responsibility of judging how well the text approaches these concerns.

What does, apparently, constitute the history of twentieth-century America? Divided into five sections of unequal length (eight chapters on “Time-Frames,” four on “Places,” five on “People,” five on “The Polity and the Economy,” and seven on “Images and Isms”), the book does address a wide variety of concepts, juxtaposing what might be expected – chapters on “the city,” and “race,” for example, with what might seem less predictable – such as a chapter on “Ideas.” This approach does justice to the plurality of American experience, but it is naturally impossible that such a text will leave any reader perfectly satisfied with what has been included. The section on “People” for example, illustrates this. A chapter titled “women” may suggest a contested homogeneity of female experience (a suggestion not borne out in the chapter itself, which deals with the racial and class-based elements of gendered identity throughout the century), but separate chapters on “race” and “labour” mean that the overlaps and connections between these chapters function successfully to underline the complex nature of any categorizations. And what about the omission of a chapter on “youth,” for example, surely a topic of great concern to America in the twentieth century? Despite Whitfield’s sparse list of important American themes to be read for, this engaging text is nonetheless extremely useful in providing overviews of and overlaps between themes, places and ideas, offering both stimulus and suggestions for further reading. It raises more questions than it answers about what constitutes stories of America, and how these are told – which is surely a good thing.

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RACHAEL McLENNAN