The paradox in Rick Altman’s title is deliberate and strategic because *Silent Film Sound* sets out to challenge many received ideas about so-called silent film. Drawing on a huge wealth of research, Altman maps out what he calls the “soundscape” of the cinema from the 1890s through to the 1920s. First he challenges the view that silent film was a single phenomenon by demonstrating how it drew on a range of existing technologies and traditions. Altman argues that around the turn of the century popular musical practices “shared a tendency toward discontinuity” (43), partly because music was not conceived quite as accompaniment but rather as a part of the whole programme. He documents the long-standing dream of “talking pictures,” a phrase which originally connoted the use of live back-stage voices over a showing film, although the earliest machines which synchronized image with sound were designed in the 1890s. It was only from around 1910 that the former were replaced by “sync-sound” systems. Crucial phases in this development were the fashion for Hale’s Tours travel films and the rise of the mixed nickelodeon programmes. Among the many shifts in perception which Altman draws to our attention is the revision of the concept of “picture” from flat rectangular space to the overall sequence of film which took place around 1912. The rise of the silent film is shown to be a process of complex technological and social development where major changes could take place within as little as two years. And the progression initially was one from sound to silence, not the expected opposite, as new practices were induced in the audience. Hence another of Altman’s concept shifts: the spectator was transformed from interlocutor to voyeur. The sense of spectacle was born and with it in the mid-1910s musical accompaniments became an orchestral part of the “big” productions laid on by D.W. Griffith and others. Thus from 1915 to 1920 there was a huge expansion in the cinematic musical repertoire, an expansion facilitated by the development of the player piano and the organ. In the late 1910s a fashion for automated musical instruments, which reached one extreme in the Wurlitzer one-man orchestra, encouraged the production of cue sheets and scores for photoplay music. Altman’s account is so varied and so detailed that it leaves the reader wondering why we use the expression “silent film.” His explanation of how the standard film programme of the 1920s emerged – drama, newsreel and comedy – makes a major contribution to the history of early cinema.
Electronic access has now been changing the ways in which historians have done their research and their teaching for several years and it is continuing to make inroads into traditional formats, often at ever increasing speeds. For those whose prime interest has been the United States, but who are located thousands of miles distant from primary resources, the arrival of websites, full of digitized original materials, is a godsend. Though they may not be able to undertake their own specialized work using such sites, their students can most certainly become familiar with original sources, which previously had only been accessible to a minority of their American counterparts. Women and Social Movements in the United States: 1600–2000 (hereafter cited as WASM) is one such website which not only offers, but also goes beyond, many of the electronic collections available to inform students and lecturers alike about the importance of women and women’s issues in the American past. This wide-ranging set of books, pamphlets, images, scholarly essays, commentaries and bibliographies, documenting the multiplicity of women’s activities in colonial America and the United States, is edited by Thomas Dublin and Kathaya Kish Sklar of the University of New York, Binghampton, assisted by an editorial board of well-known historians. Together with the Alexander Street Press of Alexandria, Virginia, who have combined the expertise of traditional publishing with software development, they have built up this electronic site. As of spring 2003, it includes fifty-nine document projects, twenty-one lesson plans, twelve document-based questions, over 1,600 documents, 600 images, 20,000 pages of full text documents and over 600 links to other websites. Recently additions include book and website reviews. More material, some 5,000 additional pages and between ten and twelve document projects, is planned to update the database annually.

WASM offers an extensive amount of information with which to plan a course or which can be used as part of an already existing course not only on women’s history, but also on social and economic history and on more traditionally organized specific periods of American history. The information on some periods is stronger than on others, with the nineteenth and twentieth centuries more visible than earlier periods. Topics covered range from “The Nineteenth Century Women’s Dress Reform Movement” through “Southern Women in the Anti-Lynching Campaign” and “Women in the Oneida Community” to “Chinese Women Garment Workers in the 1982 New York Contract Dispute.” Materials on organizations predominate. The suffrage movement, strike activities, temperance, women’s rights, moral reform and the equal-rights movement are all there. So too are leading female luminaries, like Florence Kelley, Margaret Sanger, Phyllis Schlafly, Alice Paul, Mary Anderson, Frances Willard, Anne Hutchison and Phillis Wheatley, all of whom can be placed in their socioeconomic environment as well as featuring in their own right.
Less well-known female activists also come into the mainstream. For example, Mary Ware Dennett may be unknown to many historians. Yet without some knowledge of her activities in founding the National Birth Control League in 1915 and the Voluntary Parenthood League in 1918, most students and indeed some academics would only be able to recognize Margaret Sanger as the leading activist in promoting women’s reproductive rights in the early twentieth century. Yet it is as important to know about Mary Dennett’s attempts to abolish the obscenity laws, which restricted access to birth control information, as it is to understand Margaret Sanger’s efforts to legalize birth control by giving doctors power over the distribution of the methods of contraception. Historians have frequently ignored the antagonisms between Dennett and Sanger and have downplayed the struggle between their two approaches to giving women greater access to the means of reproductive control because Sanger was politically more astute and got the powerful medical lobby on her side. Yet Dennett’s goal of giving women more control over their reproductive decisions by allowing the dissemination of birth control information was surely as loudable as allowing the male-dominated medical profession to determine who had or had not access to contraception, if not more so. Then more women might have succeeded in learning about their reproductive rights at an earlier time in the American past.

The information on the “Birth Control Movement, 1915–36,” may make Mary Ware Dennett into what traditional women’s historians have called an exceptional woman working in the public arena. But WASM also contains an abundance of information of direct importance to the lives of diverse and anonymous women. The various datasets about women in the labour force and their struggles to gain both worker’s rights and equal worker’s rights illustrate many issues facing ordinary native-born and ethnic Americans. Looking primarily at the twentieth century, students can access an array of materials about the Anti-Sweatshop Movement, 1890–1915, the “Uprising of the 20,000” or the New York City Shirtwaist Strike of 1909–10, the 1910 Chicago Garment Workers’ Strike, Puerto Rican Needleworkers during the New Deal and the Chinese Women Garment Workers’ Contract Dispute in New York City in 1982. There is now no excuse for not knowing about the poor working conditions of women in the clothing industry, whether at the start of the twentieth century or in what some observers would like to call the more enlightened years late in the same century. There was and still remains exploitation as employers seek to take advantage of frequently immigrant workers. Whether young single Russian Jewish women in New York City or Chicago in 1910 or older married Chinese women in New York City in 1982 and whether employers were of the same ethnic origin or not, long hours, low piece rates, arbitrary wage cuts, fines and unsafe and unsanitary working conditions were and still are common. Now, however, many workshops and factories have moved to Third World countries and the sweatshops providing Americans and other First World consumers with cheap clothing have become an international issue. Historically the female garment workers in the United States, documented by WASM, were often able to make cross-class alliances to support their cause when they protested. This networking gave them financial and emotional support as well as more favourable media coverage, but it was the multitude of ordinary rank-and-file women who were brave enough to come out and protest, often in strike format, who emerge through the documents. Social
movements are, after all, about many people rather than the few whose names occur frequently in the documents.

So how easy is it for students who want to know about these ordinary workers’ struggles, or about the long and chequered history of the Equal Rights Amendment or about African American women’s negotiations to be part of the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893, to find out information? What types of insight do they locate in the data? As an electronic source WASM is straightforward to use. By way of introduction the guided tour demonstrates the basic features of the dataset. Once into full access it is possible to browse by sources, authors, documents or images. Of more coherence are the peer-reviewed documents projects, or the collection of annotated primary documents with their introductory essay organized together to address a specific question. For example, students interested in “why African American women joined the Women’s Christian Temperance Movement” or “how Oberlin female students drew on their college experience to participate in antebellum social movements,” can read both the summary of the subject and its relevant sources and can then follow this up by checking out the endnotes and bibliography with any related links. This is very much directed study, not for the class of an individual instructor, but for the mass reading audience whose institutions have paid their subscription to the Alexander Street Press. For many academics and educators the advantage of accessing original sources tied together by a well-considered essay will be a boon because it demonstrates how historians work with materials to come to an interpretation of some issue in the American past. For other academics there may be too much outside intervention in the learning process. They may consider that students should be encouraged to think more for themselves rather than being led to specific conclusions. So indeed they should, but not everyone can advance at the same rate. Those who have a questioning mindset will soon ask questions of the materials, while others who are less interested will at least have ascertained how history comes to be written.

Indeed, for those of an enquiring mind there are various routes into the selected women’s movements. As all the younger generation are “whiz kids” with electronic technology, their nimble fingers and high levels of computer confidence will quickly let them trawl through the subject terms, search the dictionary of movements and conduct a more sophisticated probe for authors, sources and documents. Those with high levels of interest will be motivated to move on to cross-referencing and then to other related websites. Those for whom the women’s or social history course is a requirement may be more attracted by viewing the lesson plans which provide basic guides to topics. Whichever route is taken, users do not have to wait long for the data to load, as they often do on other sites, especially where images are concerned. It is a pity that there is no ranking of documents or little indication of how important specific subject terms are in any document. A listing of organizations, persons, publications or topics, divided by primary and secondary documents, may not be particularly helpful to those without a working knowledge of women’s history. Perhaps key terms would be more useful than indexing. But there are always more interesting or practical ways to organize a multi-stranded website. Certainly WASM equals, and moves beyond, many of the electronic collections available to construct a history of American women’s social, political and economic activities. Furthermore it can be of great benefit to anyone teaching the survey course. It is
worth its cost, but whether it will be purchased by a particular institution will depend on some guarantee that it will be directly linked to a particular, or to several general, courses. Usage is essential to warrant purchase and the only way to guarantee this usage is to make it essential to written work and to seminar participation. For some this will be too much external intervention; for others it will be a wonderful way to facilitate access to the building bricks of American women’s past.

University of Nottingham

MARGARET WALSH


Paul Apostolidis and Juliet A. Williams have assumed a difficult task in editing their volume of essays with matryoshki of Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky on the colorful cover. The subject is too recent to be adequately studied as history, yet could easily be dismissed as old politics, not terribly relevant to twenty-first-century America’s accelerating crises. In an era of neocolonialism justified as Neo-Conservatism, assaults on civil liberties, and campaigns against New Deal legacies, a book about the Clinton presidency’s sexual politics has a slightly Weimarian ring to it. Yet Democratic candidate John Kerry’s recent defeat will doubtlessly inspire nostalgia for the 1990s, and some progressives will look to Hillary Rodham Clinton for a restoration in 2008. This book provides a useful antidote to such dynasticism.

In the Introduction, Apostolidis and Williams make clear their belief that sex scandals are more arresting than stories about dietary disorders. The editors also display their commitment to political activism. “Rather than merely eliciting ripples of ashamed, self-indulgent, and voyeuristic twittering,” they write, “sex scandals send profound tremors through the discursive tectonics of politics in the United States. For citizens, the primary task is to take the measure of these shocks and quakes and amplify their magnitude in ways that maximally expose and begin to address the faultlines rending U.S. democracy” (33).

With essay collections, an uneven quality is virtually inevitable. Perhaps the best entries are Anna Marie Smith’s discussion of Bill Clinton’s personal weaknesses and Jeremy Varon’s “It Was the Spectacle, Stupid: The Clinton–Lewinsky–Starr Affair and the Politics of the Gaze.” The latter, while not the best edited, well describes both the judicialization of politics and the seemingly endless cycle of morality plays now defined as news. Nearly every contributor reminds readers that Clinton seems better in retrospect than he did in office. Many authors assume a mass radicalization which, however desirable, has not yet appeared. Indeed, it is difficult to envision how progressive politics will spread far beyond the portion of the intelligentsia not directly beholden to corporate interests.

Unfortunately, “cross-generational sex” is mentioned only once (205) as part of a list of the affair’s “taboo-breaking dimensions.” In reality, the age difference between Clinton and Lewinsky was a staple of American right-wing media at the time, inspired more than a little rage, and remains an important aspect of the saga.
One wishes that the editors had offered a bit of international contextualization, by making comparisons with the Profumo affair or some other major sex scandal in twentieth-century European politics. A similar avenue might have been a contrasting of the American hoopla to the French public’s yawning acceptance of President François Mitterrand’s mistress. As the book stands, its focus on the United States seems a bit too tight.

*Texas A&M University at Galveston*  

JAMES G. RYAN


“My plays are not political. They’re dramatic. I don’t believe that the theatre is a good venue for political argument.” David Mamet’s apparently straightforward declaration of independence from “political-argument” is qualified and compromised by this fine collection of essays. Each contributor throws into sharp relief the political passions imbuing Mamet’s diverse oeuvre, especially his coruscating portraits of callously self-regarding men only vaguely aware of the betrayals in which they collaborate, who favour talk that is tough and territorial, yet demonstrate a desperate need to recover lost ground. Mamet registers an unbridgeable gulf between an inherited language of pugilistic patriarchy and existential anxieties so acute they can barely be articulated. Christopher Bigsby’s trenchant Introduction carefully argues that in Mamet’s drama “need is as evident as the failure of experience to address it. It is the very gaps in experience which generate some of the plays’ kinetic energy” (4).

Mamet, as Bigsby explains, is not a political writer in the mould of the young Arthur Miller, whose first dramatic forays were fuelled by a vehement belief in theatrical spectacle as a flagrant means of social protest, uncovering truths which once apprehended would spur the audience towards a searing critique of the agents and instruments of government. Brenda Murphy’s essay on *Oleanna* enables us to see how Mamet’s political vision is exposed through his unforgiving depiction of characters complicit in their own redundancy, illustrating a macabre absurdity that is not cosmic in origin – as it would be for Beckett, perhaps – but an inevitable by-product of the heartless substitution of material for transcendent values. Mamet’s maimed men struggle to find their way back from dereliction to the moral high ground that reinstates the human necessities so drastically disavowed for the back-lot promises of a culture hurtling towards spiritual suicide.

This *Cambridge Companion*, while offering innovative and resourceful reappraisals of Mamet’s career as a playwright from the 1970s to the present day, also contains additional chapters on his theories of acting, his role as screenwriter and director, and a scrupulous survey of secondary scholarship on what is now a formidable corpus of writing. Philip French’s essay on “David Mamet and Film,” though astute in its assessment of key movies, does not fully exploit the opportunity to trace the
distinctive rhythm of Mamet’s work for the cinema, offering rather a survey that underestimates how Mamet’s movies extend the plays’ deep suspicion of a new America rooted in, and rotted by, the cheerless circularities of production and consumption.

University of Glasgow

ANDREW RADFORD


In her book Crime, Fear and Law in True Crime Stories (Palgrave 2001), Anita Biressi argues that marketing ploys are responsible for shifting texts from an academically focused “legal history” section to “true crime” in order to increase sales (6). This five-volume set falls somewhere in the middle of these two extremes; some individual chapters read like potboiler fantasies, whilst others offer detailed and academic exploration of well-known trials, exploring legal history, criminology; and the impact of the media. The overall series aims to introduce the historical and social contexts behind these trials, their legal issues, and the popular culture/mass media responses that result. According to the editors, focus is placed on the social construction of crime, the images of crime and its victims or perpetrators, and the effect of the media on trials. The editors argue that cases reach “celebrity” status because they seem to embody contemporary anxieties or tensions. One result may mean that trials which were once “popular” may now no longer merit attention, or have been forgotten by the “American collective memory” only to be recalled when similar situations arise. The editors also note the difficulty of assessing whether more recent trials will indeed remain popular; O. J. Simpson’s trial(s) may still resonate for their celebrity politics, game-playing, and the “race card” but may not end up in the canon of legal history.

Each volume references between thirteen and fifteen cases. Volume One covers the period 1607 to 1859, and the short Introduction reveals how difficult it is to examine two and a half centuries in just over 300 pages. Cases explored include witchcraft trials, revolutions, and rebellions; trials focusing on slaves or slavery; infamous murders and odd defences (including temporary insanity and sleepwalking). Volume Two covers the period 1860 to 1912. Cases explored include presidential assassinations; war crimes; the rise of unions; trials in relation to Native Americans, cowboys, and outlaws; and the infamous Lizzie Borden trial; as well as serial murderers and police corruption. Volume Three covers the period 1913 to 1959, and it is in this volume that mass media, including radio and film, become more important (though the penny press and “yellow journalism” were referenced in earlier volumes). Here the reader is likely to come across more famous trials, including the Lindbergh kidnapping, the Scopes “Monkey” Trial, the Fatty Arbuckle trial for rape, and the cases of Sacco and Vanzetti, John Dillinger, and Bonnie and Clyde. Gender here becomes an issue, particularly in relation to the trial of Barbara Graham (immortalized in the award-winning film I Want to Live!).
Volume Four covers the more compressed period from 1960 to 1980. The Introduction begins with a discussion of Robert Kennedy’s assassination and Sirhan Sirhan’s trial, but the first chapter discusses the even more contentious JFK assassination. Subsequent chapters focus on race relations, with at least three chapters focusing on racial tensions, one of them exploring the case of Angela Davis. Lenny Bruce’s obscenity trial is covered, as is Francine Hughes’s trial for killing her abusive husband (a trial made famous by Farrah Fawcett’s portrayal of the accused woman in *The Burning Bed*). Hughes was eventually acquitted on the grounds of temporary insanity, and her trial led to recognition of battered wife syndrome. Famous serial killers come into their own here, with chapters on Charles Manson, John Wayne Gacy, and Ted Bundy. In too many instances, however, the central figures of the trials become characters rather than historical people. This is particularly true of the chapter on Gary Gilmore, which really only becomes an academic text when it focuses on the history of the death penalty moratorium. Even here, though, there are questions over academic practice; a footnote suggests that the chapter uses information “synthesized” from a variety of sources, including Crimelibrary.com. In addition, there are errors in dates offered.

According to the cover of Chapter Six, it explores trials in the period from 1981 to 2000, but the editors suggest that it includes trials from 1980. The Introduction begins with a discussion of the Columbine High School shootings, even though none of the chapters covers this event. Neither is the Unabomber discussed; indeed, one full paragraph lists important cases not included. This is either an argument for the view that crime and media saturation increased exponentially over the last two decades of the twentieth century, or that a different kind of approach to famous trials is needed in a scholarly text. Famous trials that are explored in this volume include the trials of O.J. Simpson, Timothy McVeigh, Karla Faye Tucker, and Susan Smith. Also explored are the Exxon Valdez environmental disaster, the Rodney King beating, the case of the Central Park jogger, and the 1993 World Trade Center attack.

Inevitably for an edited collection in five volumes, some of the chapters are less well written than others. The chapter on Lizzie Borden (Volume two) never gets beyond a recounting of events, and even this is done in a stilted fashion, and the chapter on Susan Smith (Volume five) is structurally repetitive. It also mistakes some crucial dates; the death of Smith’s sons is related as 25 October 1995 and 25 October 1994 within a few pages (the latter date is the correct one). A slightly closer editorial hand may have fixed some of these anomalies.

Other chapters, however, do move beyond a “true crime” narrative. Sheila O’Hare’s discussion of Barbara Graham (Volume four) explores the role of the media in the construction of the woman murderer, as well as the influence the media potentially had on her death sentence. Amy Kearns’s chapter on the kidnapping and murder of Polly Klaas (Volume five) deserves special praise for its intellectual rigor, its detailed and careful citing of sources, and its linking of an individual trial with a wider narrative of crime and punishment, fear of crime, and the “three strikes” rule.

This collection would have benefited from more substantial introductions, a tighter editorial focus, and a ruthless culling of inferior chapters. There is a scholarly
tale to tell here, but it gets lost amongst the chapters that offer little more than case summaries.

Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson


Thomas Borstelmann focuses on how the United States government “responded to demands for an end to racial discrimination both at home and abroad” (2) as it fashioned a multiracial, anti-communist international alliance. Antiracist freedom movements targeted segregation in the United States and South Africa, and Western European colonialism, when Western Europe, South Africa and, to a lesser extent, segregationist southern Democrats were crucial parts of the anti-communist coalition. In response to this difficulty, Borstelmann argues, American presidents, with greater domestic success and leverage, tried “to limit racial polarization, both in the American South and South Africa, by containing the forces of white racism and channeling the energies of race reformers along moderate lines” (268), while “encouraging gradual change” (2).

In his opening chapter, Borstelmann contends that the racism exhibited in America’s westward continental expansion crossed over into its relationship with its Latin American and Caribbean neighbours, and its territorial acquisitions. Chapter-length studies of administrations from Truman to Johnson follow, with a further chapter covering the period from Nixon to George H.W. Bush. Borstelmann finds that presidents from southern and border states, regardless of party, proved more willing to lead against domestic racial discrimination because their backgrounds had given them a greater appreciation of its deleterious nature.

However, by privileging the Cold War and hence good relations with Western European colonial powers in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and with South Africa, which until the 1960s supplied America’s nuclear programme with most of its uranium ore, the United States effectively hampered decolonization. After 1960 America moved increasingly away from acquiescing in white domination as independence movements enjoyed growing success, the two superpowers competed for the allegiance of newly emerging Asian and African countries, new uranium supplies became available and the African American freedom struggle forced domestic change.

Despite his emphasis on the 1960s, Borstelmann’s evidence suggests that America’s foreign policy began to change when the second Eisenhower administration pragmatically created a Bureau of African Affairs, voted in support of a United Nations resolution against South African apartheid, and accepted African nonalignment. However, the change was limited. Black Africa did not attract consistent United States government interest and full economic sanctions against South Africa came only in 1986 (and, even then, over Reagan’s presidential veto).
When racial issues impinged on the interests of their Cold War allies, American policymakers generally prioritized the Cold War.


*Writing for Immortality* is concerned with the literary careers of four postbellum women novelists: Louisa May Alcott, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Elizabeth Stoddard and Constance Fenimore Woolson. Anne E. Boyd offers a multi-layered thesis in this important book. Fundamentally, she aims to resurrect writers who received acclaim during their lifetime but have since been ignored as vital participants in the formation of nineteenth-century American literature. And yet this is not just another book which seeks to “rescue” undervalued women writers. Through the use of correspondence, public and private biographical and autobiographical writings, and the fictional works of the four women themselves, Boyd presents a convincing argument about how, from the 1860s until the end of the nineteenth century, women novelists attempted to construct and maintain an authorial identity in the increasingly competitive American fictional marketplace. Recognition was simply not enough for Alcott, Phelps, Stoddard and Woolson. They aimed ambitiously for the stellar heights reserved only for the male geniuses of the literary firmament. In order to achieve such celestial prominence, the four women writers of Boyd’s study engaged in a number of strategies. *Writing for Immortality* concentrates especially upon the “fertile cultural ground” with which these women were surrounded and of which they took full advantage: the “democratic discourses of American genius and individualism, Transcendentalism, and European romanticism, combined with the examples of female geniuses in Europe and opportunities for literary professionalization in America.” These propitious historical circumstances created “an atmosphere of potential and possibility for women writers” (15). One of the most interesting aspects of *Writing for Immortality*, however, is Boyd’s engagement with the realities beneath the potentialities, the far from democratic, gendered exclusivity of genius, the rejections as well as the opportunities, the failure of the existing European models supplied by the likes of Eliot, Barrett Browning or Sand, the impossibility of ever successfully combining the woman and the artist. Despite striving for every single drop of recognition, Alcott, Phelps, Stoddard and Woolson were forced to confront the possibility that no matter how original or sparkling their work, their sex would always prevent them from achieving their place in the male-only literary elite they so craved. As Avis’s father commented scornfully in Phelps’s *The Story of Avis* (1877) when his daughter mentioned her artistic ambitions, “I can’t have you filling your head with any of these womanish apings of a man’s affairs, like a monkey playing tunes on a hand organ” (Boyd, 130). But, as Boyd reveals, these monkeys were no apes. It was precisely their difference which prevented them from achieving their ambitions during their lifetime.
and yet it is this difference which, as Boyd so effectively notes, distinguishes them today.


On 8 September 1925 a young black doctor from Florida named Ossian Sweet and his wife moved into a bungalow in a white working-class district of Detroit. Two days later, Sweet, his wife and eight other representatives of the local black “talented tenth” woke up in gaol charged with first-degree murder of a white man. The Sweets had dared to move into a white residential neighbourhood and in their efforts to defend themselves and their property from white attack, a white man had been shot. The subsequent trial was picked up by the NAACP, which, needing publicity to bolster their empty coffers, hired Clarence Darrow, America’s most famous criminal lawyer, to defend the Sweets.

The story of Ossian Sweet remained untold until recently; last spring HarperCollins released Phyllis Vine’s “One Man’s Castle” about the Sweet case and in July Michigan placed a historical marker at Sweet’s Garland Avenue house. Boyle’s account of the night of the alleged crime, as well as the two trials that followed, won him the 2004 National Book Award, and it is not difficult to see why. Arc of Justice is a gripping tale, well researched and lyrically narrated. It is littered with characters whose desire to promote civil rights is often revealed to be the result of personal ambition and vanity, but with whom we can still sympathize. Boyle uses the Sweet trial and the cast of celebrities (including Reinhold Niebuhr and James Weldon Johnson) to explore the development of segregation in northern cities, the efforts of the revived Klan and police corruption in 1920s America.

For all this, Boyle’s examination of the Sweet case goes little way towards substantiating his thesis that, in the decades that followed, “the virulent racism that had swept across the urban North in the 1910s and 1920s faded away” (338). As Boyle notes, the NAACP lost its Supreme Court case against residential segregation in 1926 and it was not until 1968 that Congress finally approved legislation barring racial discrimination in the selling and financing of homes. Moreover, surely in the North, as in the South, racial violence “faded away” after the 1920s precisely because it was incorporated into economic and political structures and no longer required the same “virulent” commitment from individual racists?

Boyle is also unconvincing in his suggestion that the trial had a rhetorical importance in persuading white America that racial hatred was something to be ashamed of. For example, Boyle pays insufficient attention to the racist language frequently deployed by Clarence Darrow. Was it really a victory for racial justice, or did Darrow’s racist oratory make it quite the reverse? Broader issues are also left unaddressed. What impact did the trial have on race relations in Detroit, or on
other court cases, if any? What was the significance for organized civil rights of
the many disputes between local branches of the NAACP and the authoritarian
headquarters in New York? Where *Arc of Justice* does succeed is in bringing to
life some of the complexities of civil rights struggle in the increasingly segregated
North.

*University of Leeds*

KATE DOSSETT


Kathryn E. Holland Braund (ed.), *The History of the American Indians [by James
ISBN 0 8173 1393 1.

This is a new edition of a history of the native Americans of the southern British
American colonies by a mid-eighteenth century author, James Adair, with a new
Introduction by the historian Kathryn E. Holland Braund. She provides a very
useful history of the period for which records relating to Adair have survived and
helps place his book in the context of what is known about his life. Braund notes
that there is much that is still unknown about Adair, including when and where he
was born and died.

Adair was a British trader who lived among the Chickasaw for several years. He
subsequently wrote a history of the Chickasaw and their Native American neigh-
bours. Adair was generally sympathetic to the Native Americans, observing, for
example, that the British colonial authorities had forced the Cherokee to become
their bitter enemies by a long succession of “wrong measures.”

Adair’s book is still of value because it is one of the earliest learned accounts of
the Native Americans of this region based on first-hand information from the
subjects themselves. However, Adair used his information to support his thesis that
Native Americans were descended from Jewish immigrants. So the first part of the
book, which is a history of the Native Americans of the southern colonies and
their customs, ignored evidence that did not support his thesis. Braund argues that
this becomes obvious in the second part of the book, in which Adair looked at six
Native American nations, the Catawba, Cherokee, Muskogee, Choctaw and
Chickasaw, separately. Here he referred to customs that did not support his thesis.
Adair’s thesis has not stood the test of time. Even the recent archaeological dis-
coversies and DNA lineage research suggesting that Native Americans are partly
descended from Stone Age European immigrants failed to substantiate his thesis.

This book will be useful for undergraduate courses that make great use of
primary sources. However, in the United States, some universities have established
websites that make material similar to Adair’s book available online. This might
have been a better way to make Adair’s book accessible to a new generation of
readers.

*University of Wolverhampton*

RICHARD A. HAWKINS
Anna Brickhouse's book seeks to reconfigure the so-called American Renaissance as a “transamerican renaissance, a period of literary border crossing, intercontinental exchange, and complex political implications” (8). The many texts Brickhouse considers “live double lives” (Edward Watts’s phrase) as she traces both political and literary exceptionalism and panamericanism (a “hemispheric consciousness” (126)) by comparing US literature and hispanophone and francophone texts.

Brickhouse’s most momentous achievement is also the book’s most pressing problem: it is a historically dense and wide-ranging study where each chapter begins with a US reference point (and addresses a different decade) and works outward to literary resonances in Mexico, the French Caribbean, Cuba and Haiti. Brickhouse skilfully re-examines American works (such as Hawthorne’s “Rappaccini’s Daughter” and Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin) while also bringing neglected works to the reader’s attention (particularly fine moments surround her analysis of the Revue des colonies and the epistolary exchange between Alexander Hill Everett and Domingo del Monte). Never neglecting the political situations in which these literary works occur, Brickhouse seamlessly integrates the travelling and subsequent transformation of texts across national and racial borders. For example, her discussion of Jicoténcal and the Mexican Conquest allows her to discuss the historicity and literary transformation of Doña Marina, literary historiography, ideas of authorship, New World tropes and national exclusivity (and its underside, transamerican anxiety). She also excels in her textual analyses when historical particularities are enacted within literary texts; for example, her pairing of the work of William Cullen Bryant with Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda’s novel, Sab, illustrates Bryant’s characters (along with contemporaneous US political policies) stifling fears of slave revolts in the Americas while Avellaneda’s characters and reverberations of “interracial genealogies – both real and imagined, both familial and textual” (179) leave open literary (and political) possibilities.

Although Brickhouse’s book achieves much in elucidating transamerican literary influence, such a geographically wide-ranging study is also bound to be problematic. Her detailed account is apt to lose an overarching focus by moving simultaneously through national, literary, ideological and historical space. Perhaps if Brickhouse had focused more narrowly on one of the many national genealogies, the book as a whole might hold together more cohesively. Her revelation of “territorial and anglophone borders of [descent in the US’s] national imaginary” (36), although perceptive, literally leaves us without a conclusion (but only an epilogue). However, Brickhouse’s book, like any important study, offers several enticing points of departure and helpfully suggests “new ways we might organize our narratives of nineteenth-century literature” (35).
John Ford and the American West is a beautifully produced book with masses of wonderful illustrations ranging from stills taken from Ford’s films and pictures taken on location, to reproductions of western paintings by such artists as Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington, Charles M. Russell, Henry Farny and Charles C. Schreyvogel. The western paintings appear in the first of the six main chapters, “The Myth of the West,” to explain the longevity of the myth, and throughout later chapters to show Ford’s borrowing from and adaptation of the work of these artists.

The Introduction is, effectively, a short biography and the five chapters following “The Myth of the West” investigate Ford’s handling of history and his particular attention to and infatuation with the US Cavalry, Native Americans and Monument Valley. The final chapter, “The Telltale Signature,” presents the most technical discussion of all the chapters on Ford’s cinematography, looking at his stylistic techniques: framing, camera angle, lighting and setting. There is additional information in these chapters about the post-Civil War army (74), and economics in Navajoland (161–2). Throughout these chapters there are several “inserts” on Ford’s leading men (Henry Fonda, John Wayne, James Stewart), and on other aspects of Ford’s filming practice in sections called “The Regulars,” “Women in Ford’s Westerns,” “Native American Actors,” “Ford and the Navajo,” and “My Favorite Location.”

In the chapter on Native Americans (which anachronistically uses the singular “The Native American” in its title), Cowie’s discussion of the role of American Indian actors is a little uncertain. At one point he writes, “As with most other Hollywood movies until recent years, Ford did not always cast Native American parts authentically” (128) but, soon afterwards, “From the outset, John Ford used authentic Native Americans in his films” (130). In “Ford and the Navajo,” however, Cowie states that for “his extras and Indians of every hue and tribe, Ford turned to the Navajo indigenous to Monument Valley. They played Arapaho and Apache ... Commanche ... and Cheyenne” (162). Recent critics of Hollywood westerns would see little “authenticity” in this (Churchill, Kilpatrick, Steadman, Strickland), but perhaps the distinction is between “leading” and “supporting” cast, as illustrated in the insert entitled “Native American Actors” where only one is discussed (Chief John Big Tree) and the section is a mere one page long. But perhaps this should not be a criticism of Cowie but of Ford.

The book includes a filmography, bibliographical references and an index and would be a beautiful and valuable addition to university libraries for students and teachers of Hollywood movies, and a particularly useful introduction to the western genre and, indeed, western art.

University of Essex

SUSAN FORSYTH
Film Voices collects together a number of interviews given by some of the leading figures in the American movie industries (as well as a number of less well-known figures) published in the journal Post Script between 1981 and 1999. While it may seem mean-spirited to snipe at a book that does at least attempt to connect academic film studies to the workings of the industry itself, there are several problems with this book; some arise from the limitations of the interview format, others the editor could have tried more positively to address.

The first issue is precisely who the book is aimed at. The interview format lends itself to a tone that, if not exactly sycophantic, certainly falls short of the level of critical engagement expected of an academic work. Presumably the likes of Clint Eastwood, Francis Ford Coppola and Oliver Stone would be unwilling to agree to interviews in which their politics are likely to be challenged, and this compels their interviewers to exercise a certain restraint. Nevertheless the absence of such a challenge is a serious omission in a book that aspires to academic credentials and provides this book with some of its least palatable moments, such as the attempts to sugarcoat Eastwood’s right-wing politics with the unconvincing explanation that Eastwood is merely a champion of the individual and an enemy of bureaucracy, whose politics lie outside an over-simplistic division between left and right. If this book is insufficiently critical for an academic readership, then it also seems too arcane for a wider readership of cinephiles; while it is possible to imagine film buffs wanting to read interviews with the better-known directors, it seems less likely that they would have as much interest in the interview with, say, Dede Allen (a film editor with an impressive filmography, who actually provides some of the most interesting insights into the Hollywood industry in this volume).

By far the biggest problem with this book, however, is the overwhelming whiteness and maleness of the figures who are given a voice. Of the seventeen interviews only three feature women filmmakers. No non-white filmmakers are featured. Perhaps this is indicative of the imbalance in the industry itself, but it is an inequity that the editor of this volume could have tried harder to address.

London Metropolitan University

MIKE CHOPRA-GANT


Capital Resurgent, by two French Marxist economic historians, analyses the monetarist counter-revolution of the 1980s in the United States and Europe – mostly France. They argue the great Keynesian post-war growth spurt was undermined by falling profits and rising inflation in the mid-1970s. Hence (F)inance (they use...
“f” but mean “F”), the code word for interlocking financial, mostly American, interests, deliberately re-imposed “neoliberal” orthodoxy in the “Coup of [19]79.” Duméil and Lévy first deal at length with the late twentieth century, but the chronological starting point of the analysis is the crisis of the 1890s. Facing falling profits and depression, Finance modernized industry and raised productivity. However, the transformation was not complete by 1929, and they ascribe the 1930s depression, the “Crisis after the Crisis,” to the consequent fragility of the system exposed by monetary shocks. World War II completed the modernization of the economy, and together with New Deal reforms and Keynesian economics created the great post-war boom. However, by the mid-1970s stagflation had replaced growth, and Finance vigorously reasserted its power and engineered the communications and organizational revolutions of the late twentieth century. Now the authors warn of a new “Crisis after the Crisis.” They do not think a 1930s-style depression is inevitable because Finance will use all the Keynesian and monetarist tools available to avert it, but they expect storms.

The analysis and the translated language has rigour, interest and a certain charm. Huge areas of ground are covered, ably aided by charts and boxes. Long-run stage theories are intriguing, but inevitably skim detail, especially at the turning points. The authors’ analysis of the 1930s depression is attractive, but controversial. Their argument that the post-war boom was not exceptional, and that monetarism was introduced by coup’ is debatable. James Callaghan admitted the party was over. Margaret Thatcher argued there was no alternative. The authors allow Keynes’s “brilliantly open, but still socially limited perspectives were the only alternatives to a more radical road – that we have known for decades to have gone wrong, everywhere” (204), and therefore support stronger national or international institutions to moderate capitalism. Characteristically they make internal class/industrial dynamics drive the system rather than international relations. It is assumed Finance exploits other classes, and that the leading industrial nations carelessly exploit the poorer. However, one might say the major problems of the industrial countries since 1970 have resulted from increased competition from successful developing countries. Hence their last foreboding chapter, inevitably entitled “History on the March,” might better perhaps have addressed “China on the March.” Nevertheless this is an interesting and useful book.

Leeds University

J. R. Killick


The idea of fragments has fascinated writers for a long time, from ancient Greek philosophers to postmodern theorists. Camelia Elias’s book is a history of the fragment as it appears in philosophy, literature and postmodern theory. Much of Elias’s approach is concerned with definition. She asks, “What constitutes a fragment”? “Does it acquire a name of its own, or is it labelled by others?” For American postmodernists like William S. Burroughs, Kathy Acker or Donald
Barthelme, fragmentation relates to style. Further, a fragmented text is a welcome consequence of intertextuality, and in this sense any discourse surrounding the fragment is first and foremost a writing/reading strategy. Similarly, Elias concludes that the fragment is a genre. Since the fragment is primarily an act or a function, she argues, it justifies its categorization as “a performative genre.” To reach this conclusion Elias examines many literary and critical texts; the examples of fragments discussed range from Greek antiquity to modernism and postmodernism, from Heraclitus to Friedrich Schlegel and Gertrude Stein to American postmodernism to an engaging analysis of Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus* in the last chapter.

Elias also explores some other, less obvious, aspects of the poetics of the fragment. She connects, for example, the fragment to the carnivalesque, which enhances her argument that the fragment is a performative genre. It is at points like these that Elias’s argument seems more convincing. However, this book’s overstated concern with the fragment’s function in critical theory is also its major gap. In her attempt to reproduce a critical discourse on the fragment in a poststructuralist fashion, hence the long and unnecessarily complicated sentences, Elias omits to explore other equally important aspects of the poetics of the fragment, besides its “ekphrastic,” “epigrammatic” or “epitaphic” qualities. What is the fragment’s cultural and political function, for example? Whilst this book contributes to the field primarily through innovative readings of both literature and critical theory, it does not wholly convince that the fragment as merely a poststructuralist tool should not be finally put to rest.

*Birkbeck College, University of London*

POLINA MACKAY


Reading Glenn Feldman’s *The Disfranchisement Myth* is a little like watching an over-the-hill prizefighter bludgeoned by a younger, more powerful contender. Since Alabama was the only southern state to put its disfranchising constitution to a referendum, in 1901, it has served as a laboratory for historians writing about the process. The “disfranchisement myth” of Feldman’s title is the notion, established by C. Vann Woodward and reinforced with data by J. Morgan Kousser, that white elites pushed disfranchisement through against the opposition of poor whites, who stood in solidarity with African Americans against the measures that would strip the vote from both groups. Feldman’s argument is straightforward and presented on the first page of his Introduction: “It is one thing to say that the vast majority of the resistance [to disfranchisement] was comprised of plain whites. It is quite another altogether to say that the vast majority of plain whites chose this path of resistance.” In some ways, the rest of the book is an elaborate and exhaustive footnote to this point. Feldman more than makes his case, bringing in example after example culled from manuscript collections and every obscure Alabama newspaper of the period to show plain whites and their politicians all too ready to support
disfranchisement of African Americans, even when they express an awareness that they, too, could be caught in the new constitution’s toils. If extensive quotations like these were not enough, Feldman includes twenty-three tables in the Appendix to show exactly how each county voted at each stage of the process. Though Feldman’s book focuses on the period after populists began to decline in Alabama, his argument casts this period in a new light as well: if so many Populists were willing to disfranchise their black brothers in 1901, how committed could they have been to a biracial cooperative commonwealth a decade before? Feldman points out that Black Belt whites – the planters and the Big Mules – could not have called the constitutional convention or carried the referendum without the support of former anti-Democrats (a blanket term for populists and other political insurgents) and lilywhite Republicans. He makes a strong case that a “Reconstruction syndrome,” defined as “a psychological response to Dixie’s traumatic experience of defeat, abolition, economic ruin, military occupation, and black suffrage,” was often the decisive factor in convincing plain whites to vote in ways that would ultimately prove their undoing.

BRUCE E. BAKER
Department of History, Royal Holloway,
University of London


As Michael O’Brien once noted, Louisa McCord presents a troubling figure for historians both of women and of the slaveholding South. An outspoken and unapologetic defender both of slavery and of women’s subordinate social role, she left a wealth of material – comprising poetry and essays but few letters and no diaries – for future historians to work on, but it was not at all what they wished to read. Mary Chesnut, more obviously the southern belle and more willing to modify her views in later versions of her Civil War diary to express solidarity – however feigned – with slaves, was more to modern tastes, and so McCord languished on the sidelines of the scholarship until Elizabeth Fox-Genovese devoted a chapter to her in her study of black and white women of the Old South, Within the Plantation Household. Finally, at the start of the twenty-first century, Leigh Fought has given us a full-length biography of the woman whom Mary Chesnut described, presumably intending praise, as possessing “the intellect of a man and the perseverance and endurance of a woman” (1). For Fox-Genovese, McCord was more typical of her class and gender than some historians had been willing to acknowledge, and Fought does not deviate far from this assessment. She acknowledges her debt to Fox-Genovese’s work, but attempts to place McCord in a broader, national setting and to explore what Fought sees as the contradictions in McCord’s life and ... her personal struggle to accept her position in the patriarchal society that she so strongly defended” (6).
McCord’s life, Fought observes, “reads like an exciting historical novel,” and certainly as she is described here McCord comes across in a faintly Dickensian way, with distinct overtones of Elizabeth I in her identification with her father, Langdon Cheves, the strong patriarch whose power and authority McCord invoked in order to establish and retain her own position in a society that denied women full autonomy (2). For elite antebellum southern women, child-bearing and -rearing was the pinnacle of their achievement and the only real basis of their social standing, a responsibility that Fought succinctly sums up as ‘infused with political meaning, but not political power’ (34). This was not, however, the case for all southern women, so in that regard entitling the biography Southern Womanhood and Slavery is somewhat misleading. Fuller use, too, could have been made of McCord’s own writings. Although this extremely well written and very welcome biography brings McCord’s times vividly to life, McCord herself remains somewhat elusive – in some ways the still rather unwelcome ghost at the feast of feminist scholarship. Still, if not quite yet seated at the table, McCord has at least, with this biography, entered the building.

University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

S.-M. GRANT


Coming to certain oral history collections one is left thinking of a muddle of literary allusions, not least L.P. Hartley’s The Go Between, with its famous ‘the past is another country, they do things differently there’. When It Happened in the Catskills was first published in 1991 the authors shared the hope of developers mentioned in their Introduction, who were eager to see the Catskills relaunched as a family-oriented destination for foreign tourists, especially the Japanese. The new introduction for 2004 sorrowfully makes it clear that these dreams were not realized, and thus the iconic Catskills that stood for a certain kind of New York Jewish leisure-seeking and entertainment-loving class remains as nothing more than a memory: gone forever, like the cabaret stars, lounge singers and Hollywood legends that people these recollections along with those who worked as agents, waiters, money-men and housekeepers. With this book, to use another far-fetched literary reference, we are truly in search of lost time.

It Happened in the Catskills is neither a sentimental tribute to its time, nor an over-earnest analytical study, and thus could find a place on the shelf of the historian of New York’s Jewish culture, or lover of the “golden age” of American entertainment. The index of contributors and the people they mention is invaluable, and includes appearances by such unexpected personalities as Marlene Dietrich, Edward R. Murrow and Henry Kissinger. The book is more than suitable for a general, non-academic audience, and someone looking to discover the exact place Neil Sedaka and Debbie Reynolds occupy in American cultural history could not be better served. In 2005 these two survivors carry on something of the Catskills tradition in their residencies in Las Vegas, but the Nevada casino hotels of today otherwise owe
little to the bungalow-colony resorts of upstate New York at mid-century. In the most entertaining – and also the most universally appealing – part of the book, comedians revisit their shtick about security huts, fences, Simon Sez and traffic cones. For those who remember the Catskills in their heyday, these details of life in the resorts, evoked by the contributing comics and MCs, will surely take them right back to the mountains of their youth.

University of Sussex

JOE KENNEDY


Labor Versus Empire includes a substantial editors’ introduction and sixteen articles, fifteen originally given at the Focused Research Program in Labor Studies (University of California, Irvine) 2003 conference. This collection is timely: its inception coincides with the Iraq war; migration is a major issue around the globe, often linked with asylum-seeking; the world has shrunk and its population grown ever larger, its resources depleted at an alarming rate. Internationally and locally, race (and/or ethnic difference) and gender remain crucial aspects of conflicts engendered by, or engendering, migration. These are not only north–south phenomena; almost everywhere the poor find work or better wages by migrating, like Burmese workers in Thailand (now threatened with expulsion after the Indian Ocean tsunami). The social forces and conflicts making history are often treated as if some invisible hand called “globalization” were at work, something to be accommodated, something that cannot be controlled.

The editors and contributors, unabashedly on the left, will have none of this; for them globalization, as usually employed, is an ideological construct. They opt for a sociology in which capitalism, imperialism, neoliberalism (economically speaking) and neoconservatism (politically speaking) are forces labour must resist. Many papers focus on local arenas of exploitation and struggle: sex and tourism in Cuba and the Dominican Re-public, Jaffa (Arab) and Tel Aviv (Jewish) during the Mandate, the Shanghai labour movement 1925–27, Venezuelan oil camps, the Hong Kong economy, Mexico’s rural sector, Filipina women workers in alien lands, “Can U.S. Workers Embrace Anti-Imperialism?” Most of these authors are not without hope, although they know that today’s left is marginalized in political discourse and action. The less optimistic piece on US workers mentioned above concludes,

Anti-imperialism … is not solely a reaction against the atrocities of the global North, but it is the suggestion that the world … operates on a fundamentally different basis. Creating and articulating such a vision should be the task of a genuine left. In the absence of such a new vision, we will find ourselves … fighting endless resistance battles with little hope of final victory.

Papers with wider focus and analytic intent are more pertinent for Americanists, including those in Section I, “Empire: Global Capitalism and Domination,” two
treating Latin America (and in one case its relations to the US). Elsewhere, engagement with the US experience is mostly indirect or comparative. A surprising bonus in a very good collection of conference papers is a general index.

George Rehin


Steve Halper and Jonathan Clarke are two “centre-right” conservatives with a mission. Their purpose in America Alone is to dismiss the central tenets of contemporary neoconservatism as both fallacious and dangerous, and to “assert the virtues of the interest-driven, consensus seeking, risk-conscious policies accepted with great success since World War II.” Halper and Clarke are no bleeding-heart liberals. The authors establish their conservative credentials unambiguously by applauding Eliot Abrams’s “sustained efforts to bring freedom to Central America in the early 1980s.”

America Alone is both a comprehensive, cogently argued history of neoconservatism from the 1970s to the present, and a forceful expression of political advocacy. Halper and Clarke trace the rise of first-generation neoconservatives such as Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoretz and Daniel Patrick Moynihan before turning their attention to the prominent second generation that exert such influence on the current Bush administration – Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, I. Lewis Libby and William Kristol.

Halper and Clarke criticize the limited intellectual range of contemporary neoconservatism – focused on toppling Saddam Hussein and spreading democracy in the Middle East – as compared to the “debates on metaphysics and social conditions that engaged their forebears.” The authors argue that today’s “neoconservative doctrine … is a questionable model for the threat of terrorism.” They conclude that America must refocus on reviving its “moral authority” through re-engaging with the world multilaterally, and meeting the terrorist threat not through state-on-state military action but as an issue of “problem management.” In this respect, the United States could learn much from the United Kingdom, Spain and other nations that have been affected by terrorism.

Choosing not to mince their words, Halper and Clark contend that the neoconservatives “hijacked” US foreign policy in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. The authors provide a compelling critique of the wrong-headed simplicity of the foreign-policy strategy championed by Wolfowitz, Perle, Bolton et al. And they are particularly convincing in their portrayal of discredited American media that either lay supine as Bush pushed towards military action against Iraq (CNN, MSNBC and the New York Times) or distorted reality to facilitate public amenability to the neoconservative agenda (Fox News, the New York Post, the Washington Times and the talk radio demagogues led by Rush Limbaugh).
America Alone, taken as a whole, is an impressive achievement, although historians will take more from the first two-thirds of the book – tracing the rise, fall and rise of the neoconservative movement – than the final third, where Halper and Clarke explain what constitutes the best way forward for US foreign policy. One figure that receives insufficient attention in America Alone is the president himself. In arguing that the neocons “hijacked” US foreign policy, the authors imply that some form of forcible wresting took place. Did the neoconservatives really dupe a hopelessly underprepared George W. Bush, or even lure him from the righteous “realist” path? Or does the current incumbent deserve more credit as a foreign policy force in his own right? Future historians will be better placed to determine whether George W. Bush is the tabula rasa that the authors imply.

University of Nottingham

DAVID MILNE


This is a paperback reprinting of David Ingram’s ground-breaking book first published in 2000. Recognizing that Hollywood’s mode of engagement with environmental issues has always been within its own convention of melodrama that is fundamentally anthropocentric, Ingram examines an impressive range of examples of this process through the “critical realist” perspective established by Kate Soper in What is Nature? Aware that this is an early contribution to this field, Ingram has sought to indicate needs for further research by making preliminary observations on 156 films. The strength of this book is that Ingram conducts his discussion through individual films, whilst offering some useful ideological analyses of Hollywood’s approach to the major themes he considers: “wilderness,” “wild animals” and “development and the politics of land use.”

Ingram’s analysis reveals Hollywood’s “utopian desire for a re-enchanted nature,” the affirmation and unsettling of gender identities in films such as Deliverance and River Wild, the mythic ecological Indian, victims and villains in the rainforest, a group of anti-hunting movies, the treatment of wolves, bears, sharks and whales, together with the role of African safaris. In the process, the book “challenges the anthropocentrism of much film criticism.” It is in the introductions to each of his three sections that Ingram positions his approach within film studies and American studies, but also in relation to ecofeminism and postmodernism.

Resisting the relativism of poststructuralism, Ingram argues, for example, that “some social constructions of animal ethology are more accurate than others,” that the “death of nature” position of Jameson is actually a crude oversimplification and that the technophobia of postmodernists like his predecessor in this field, Jhan Hochman, are “motivated by nostalgia for an enchanted nature before the fall into human culture.” Ingram argues that both the complicity of these theorists themselves in the process they lament and the possibility of any “effective resistance against environmental damage” are denied by these totalizing approaches. His final discussion of the Hollywood treatment of nuclear power, automobile culture and
rural–urban issues does not make great claims for the movies he discusses, but reveals the subtle judgements about complex tensions that his own approach makes possible. *Green Screen* provides a sound and stimulating platform for further work on the “contradictions, compromises and evasions” in the “green movie.”

**Former Reader in Literature and Environment, University of Leeds**

**Terry Gifford**


Despite the proliferation of high-quality monographs and journal articles on American sport during the past two decades, there have been relatively few works published explicitly as survey texts. Unlike the standard works on the longer history of American sport by Benjamin Rader and Elliott Gorn and Warren Goldstein, Kathryn Jay has focused exclusively on the post World War II context. Whilst neither sports historians nor sports fans will find much “new” in this book, Jay provides solid historical detail and context throughout as well as an adept examination of key contradictions within the dominant American ideology of sport. The key contribution to the literature is Jay’s focus on sport as a primary earner of patriotism – that sport has been an integral component to the “American way” of life since World War II. This ideology has had both radical and conservative implications. Moreover, she asserts (but does not sufficiently develop) an intriguing point that religions – wedded with patriotism – has served as a central component of American national, sporting identity.

In the book’s strongest chapter Jay illustrates the centrality of sports in bolstering “American values” during the Cold War. Not only were sports heroes “larger-than-life representations of all that was good about American society,” but when those “heroes fell, or were corrupted [especially those in Olympic sports], the fall signified larger problems facing the United States – pride, greed, complacency, lack of will.” (47) Although she does not explicitly engage Tom Englehardt’s work on the influence of “victory culture” upon American youth, Jay suggests that “no matter how much fun playing sports was, the need to remind youngsters of their Cold War responsibilities was never far from the surface” (63).

Throughout the past sixty years American sport has been a hotly contested terrain. During the 1960s sports and social change were on a collision course – especially around the issue of racial equality and justice. “Fans,” Jay writes, “read sports through the lens of broader social changes, making athletes cultural symbols for both radicalism and tradition and stability … despite widespread social change, even within sports, the sporting world remained a site of conservatism” (125, 137). With regard to gender equality, the key struggles for wider access were played out within intercollegiate athletics but the popular legitimization of women’s sport unfolded within the stellar televised performances in professional tennis and golf which brought the women’s game to a new level of visibility and credibility. Although she notes the fitness revolution of the 1970s and 1980s, Jay devotes a
disappointingly brief passage to this determinative development in the acceptance of women's physical activity. Jay's analysis of the “contested meanings of sports” during the past two decades considers some of the ways in which sports reflected and shaped an emerging discourse about sexuality and morality. Jay connects developments such as the lack of Title IX enforcement, the hyper-commercialization of the Olympics, and the growth of steroid use to the “Reagan Revolution” wherein “looking ‘strong’ signalled internal strength and masculine power as much as it signalled athletic prowess” (199).

In all, this is a well-written and useful survey work that will be a welcome addition to reading lists in contemporary American history and American studies courses.

University of Lincoln

S. W. POPE


Psychological portraits of historical events can make interesting reading. The rise in interdisciplinary approaches, extending the use of psychology and biology to politics, has become the preoccupation of a new breed of scholars. Johnson can be said to be part of this current, seeking to understand psychobiological factors behind the decisions that lead states to war. He asks the question whether there is a human tendency “toward overconfidence” which can “lead us into wards when a more realistic assessment might keep the peace” (2). Overconfidence, he argues, is “a widespread phenomenon that we cannot ignore in attempting to understand the conflict.” Finally Johnson hopes to show the reader that overconfidence is causative of war. Johnson’s selection of events is ambitious, to say the least: World War I, the Munich Crisis of 1938, the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the Vietnam War, the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the “Coalition of the Willing.”

In chapter 7 Johnson distils some of his ideas, explaining why “states are often so belligerent toward each other that they go to war, at the expense of blood and treasure, even when the odds are against them” (173). Johnson “found evidence of positive illusions among leaders on both sides in World War I, and on the U.S. side during the Vietnam War. Chamberlain’s over-optimism about Hitler’s intentions exacerbated the Munich crisis, as did Khrushchev’s over optimism that the United States would permit Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba.” Johnson further argues that, at the end of the latter two crises, “positive illusions were absent” (173). Protagonists of the Munich debacle and the Cuban Missile Crisis averted conflict, if only momentarily, through negotiations that resulted in mixed success. The 2003 invasion of Iraq by the US-led coalition forces saw a comical display of overconfidence on the part of the Iraqis that led to a rapid tactical defeat (194–96) and the ensuing stalemate of an ill-planned occupation by the Coalition forces (206–7).

Johnson’s assumptions on positive illusions, reducing historical events to neatly ordered case studies of human behaviour, is, however, problematic. The biological context risks being overly deterministic, plotting human behaviour against an unduly
rigid schema. Furthermore, one risks, in works such as this, reducing decision-makers in historical time and space to artificial models of a management school, where, to take one example from the *Journal of Business Strategy* (February 2005), overconfidence should be defused to “generate strategy alternatives.” “The result,” it concludes: “intelligent success.”

*BINOY KAMPMARK*

*University of Cambridge*


This interesting multidisciplinary study casts a wide net over the use of seasonal motifs in American culture. Kammen, a leader in the history of ideas of the United States, covers novels, film, poetry, painting, illustration, magazines and other forms of popular culture to show what few will find surprising – that the seasonal motif has had a long history in American cultural life. This book is, therefore, a useful catalogue of that theme. The difficulty, probably inherent in a topic as broad as this, is that there is little to analyse or argue here beyond how common it is and how often it is used as a metaphor for the human life cycle. The author sees four themes that run through American cultural experience of seasons: nationalism, nostalgia, nature and novelty. These are referred to throughout the text but do not dominate the structure. He is wary of drawing any large conclusions from what he informs the reader has been twenty years of collecting seasonal artefacts and information.

Although the title promises the focus will be on America, the first quarter of the text considers the European uses of the motif before the American Revolution. The remainder is divided evenly between 1776 to 1940 and 1940 to the present. This latter section is the heart of the book as it is only here that the author begins focusing on specific artists and writers in substantial detail. Kammen considers the writers on nature from 1945 to the 1970s in considerable detail. These heirs to Muir and Burroughs include Aldo Leopold, Hal Borland, Edwin Way Teale, Rachel Carson and Joseph Wood Krutch. The remainder of his consideration of the period from 1945 to the 1970s receives only twice as much space as these authors.

With forty-eight plates and sixty-five black-and-white illustrations, this well-illustrated work offers an overview of the motif that is provocative and useful, although imbalanced in what it covers. This work confirms what we know almost intuitively, than the changing seasons have been very important to the American mind, but it goes little further than that. Others, perhaps, can use the material collected here as a way of coming to terms with or at least starting a discussion on, the meaning(s) of this motif for individuals in American culture and in culture generally.

*GEORGE CONYNE*

*University of Kent*
In this deft and illuminating study of collaboration in western American literature, Linda K. Karell confronts the “stunning” persistency of the idea of authorship as a solitary and individual act, “despite its effective dismantling by poststructuralist, feminist, and colonialist perspectives.” While Bakhtin, Foucault, Barthes, and many more recent critics have written of the death of the author as a coherent and unified category, most humanities scholars still subscribe to “the concept of author as unique and individual” (an idea that is borne out institutionally, through such disparate issues as plagiarism, tenure review, and the scholarly monograph). Karell’s book argues for nothing less than “an awareness of the implications of the collaborative process in which all literary experience is drenched,” and she takes as her case study a body of literature seemingly most committed to the preservation of the myth of individual authorship: the literature of the American West. Through a series of readings of texts by canonical and non-canonical western writers (including Wallace Stegner, Louise Erdrich and Michael Dorris, Mary Austin, Mary Clearman Blew, and others), Karell stresses the formal, thematic, and extratextual ways in which these texts are collaborative, from the co-authorship of Erdrich and Dorris, to the collaboration between different aspects of herself/ves in Mary Austin’s autobiography Earth Horizon, to the implicit (though anxiously denied) collaboration between Stegner and Mary Hallock Foote in Angle of Repose, the novel that Stegner based on Foote’s life. In the process Karell not only deconstructs the tired linkage between western American literature and rugged individualism, but also refigures western literature as a site of difference, negotiation, and relational struggle marked by often unconscious anxieties about gender, race, class, and region.

At times this analysis loses its critical edge, as it does when Karell talks about the “collaboration” between genres in The Crown of Columbus or when she arrives at the claim that “collaboration is the nature of language rather than an exception to it” – a point so general as to verge on meaninglessness. Yet in her conclusion Karell stresses that she is defining collaboration in a “huge” way so as to foreground the term’s most radical implications, particularly the challenge this term poses to our discursive and institutional emphasis upon individual and unitary authorship. In its mission to theorize collaboration as a crucial, even essential, but often overlooked, aspect of literary production, and in its particular intervention into the field of western American literature, this is an important, timely, and exciting book.

Dartmouth College

Barbara Will

This is a much-needed and very accessible study of second-generation immigrants in New York City. Kasinitz, Mollenkopf and Waters have edited a collection of fascinating case studies with a broad sociological focus, taking into account, amongst others, racial, gender and religious identity issues. The book is divided into four sections, namely “Education” “Work” “Participation” and “Identity” each containing an introductory essay followed by three or four scholarly chapters. This project moves away from the traditional study of immigrant identities based solely on conceptions of race. The editors, and indeed the case studies that follow, are careful to make the distinction between “racial” and “ethnic” identity, the former defined here largely in terms of physical difference and the latter an ever-changing and flexible entity. Indeed, Dae Young Kim’s aptly titled ‘Leaving the Ethnic Economy: The Rapid Integration of Second-Generation Korean Americans in New York’ proposes that young Korean Americans are purposefully choosing alternative routes to those of their parents, whether or not those routes are necessarily more financially rewarding. The added importance of class difference for this particular immigrant group is remarked upon by Sara S. Lee in her chapter, which is based around first-hand interviews with sixty Korean Americans. Insightful studies of gendered identities do not focus solely on the female experience; Nancy Lopez, for example, discusses the gender divide in Dominican high schools, focusing on the situation of male students and teachers in particular. In addition the combination of statistics and case studies or interviews in many chapters allows a comprehensive and intuitive picture to emerge. For example, Avuva Zeltzer-Zubida’s perceptive chapter entitled ‘Affinities and Affiliations: The Many Ways of Being a Russian Jewish American’ presents tables of information consolidated by a case study of one Russian Jewish immigrant who came to realize that being Jewish in Americas “is both a religion and a nationality” (345). The accent in this collection is always away from the conception of any group of New Yorkers as homogeneous, and towards a realization of hybridity. The second generation of New York immigrants, this collection suggests, are truly living liminally, constructing new identities on the borders of New York from the fragments of their historical selves.

*Middlesex University*  

**HOLLY FARRINGTON**


King’s book is an examination of group-based ideology, its past destructiveness and anticipated continuity in more ameliorated forms. Riding the wake of demographic statistics which predict that whites in America will be a minority within the next fifty years provides King with a way to make his history apply to the future as well as the
past, his theory being that “group-based distinctions will be maintained, the melting pot not melting everyone” (7). This prediction is certainly hard to refute, the strength of *Strangers* being its narrative of inclusions and exclusions less from the vantage point of whites than from the minority groups subjected to them. Although King noticeably devotes more attention to African Americans than other groups, there is no real imbalance which is not redressed by the selective research surrounding each wave of immigrants, and not the least of *Strangers*’ strengths is its capacity to establish interethnic links rather than examining each ethnicity in isolation. The letters of African American soldiers fighting nationalists in the Philippines (1899–1902), for example, illustrate that the parallels between domestic racism and US foreign policy were not lost on some soldiers (47) and thus King avoids demarcating the history of one group from another, African American support for the Japanese attempt in 1919 to have the League of Nations contain a clause banning racial discrimination being another case in point (74). There are also some neat summaries of key concepts and periods, “passing” and Liberia being respectively described as internal and external exit options (54–59), and the desire for groups with specific historical grievances to remain distinct is incorporated into King’s thesis on the understanding that “it illustrates why to be genuinely inclusive one-people nationhood must be group-sensitive.” (145).

The book may be concisely described as a chapter-by-chapter series of national and international incidents framed by the response of specific ethnic groups as the events were seen to apply directly or indirectly to their own concerns. The detail King devotes toward the contrast between public policy and private opinion, such as Roosevelt’s indifference to the internment of Japanese Americans despite his proclamations that they were as equal as Germans or Italians (90), makes this text a useful pedagogical tool for any introductory course on the history of ethnic minorities within the US, and King’s final chapter, focusing upon the continuity not just of preferential or racist treatment toward minorities but of segregation too (160), enlivens what might otherwise have been a relatively undistinguished text.

*DANIEL MCKAY*


With 150 entries, Philip C. Kolin’s preface to the first encyclopedia on the life and work of Tennessee Williams wisely refutes any attempt at a comprehensive listing, stressing instead his endeavour to provide only “the most essential information” for a broad readership. Whilst the book is certainly consistent in its lucidity and concision, it is also an important, and necessary, addition to the recent boom in re-evaluations of Williams by theatre practitioners and scholars.

Following *The Undiscovered Country: The Later Plays of Tennessee Williams* (2002), also edited by Kolin, the encyclopedia format is arguably more successful in liberating the authors’ canon from the popularly ascribed narrative of decline. Kolin concedes that the longest entries have been reserved for the most famous works of the
mid-twentieth century. However, the rigorous contextualizations and often provocative interpretations contained therein throw into sharp relief the unique intertextuality of Williams’s oeuvre. An engaging analysis of *The Glass Menagerie* foregrounds the social and political canvas of the Depression and impending world war, allowing the reader to note the continued influence of Williams’s own apprenticeship in agitprop theatre. Discussions of *Orpheus Descending* and *Suddenly Last Summer* push beyond common appraisals of these works as emotional autobiography framed by Gothic melodrama, viewing them also as political allegories of 1950s America. The critical summary of *A Streetcar Named Desire* locates memory, madness and desire as the generative themes employed to “test the limits of theatrical realism.” A look at commentaries on the author’s later experimental plays suggests that these are also the defining concepts of Williams’s larger artistic enterprise. Perceptive examinations of two late one-acters, *Kirche, Kuchen und Kinder* and *The Travelling Companion*, scrutinize the effect of Williams’s homoeroticism, no longer submerged in heterosexual dynamics, on dramatic form and language, reading the works as acute responses to the gay-liberation movement.

Elsewhere the encyclopedia gives ample evidence of its overall excellence. Allean Hale’s consideration of the place of “Art” in his drama is especially pertinent, arguing that he constructed entire plays, such as *Streetcar* and *In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel*, around the visual image, suggesting in turn the necessity of a spatial rather than linear concept of unity in interpreting Tennessee Williams. “Texts” and “Manuscript Collections” offer fresh insight into Williams’s work process and the vast quantities of unpublished materials (the latter entry helpfully provides websites for all online inventories). Indeed it is with the prospect of future Williams publications that the reader can gauge the real significance of this encyclopedia. New publications will demand new readings of existing texts, our perceptions of Williams altering with each interpretation. Philip C. Kolin and his contributors can be credited with assembling an authoritative core reference work, essential in aiding future students, scholars and directors in diverse reappraisals of a remarkably expansive corpus of work.

Garry Maciver

_Glasgow_


Written in the midst of and about post-11th September US immigration policy, Lawrence’s is an attempt at mapping out not only the interactions between religions as encountered by different racial and ethnic groups but also the interracial dynamic as affected by new religions. Grounded by the Hart-Celler Immigration Act of 1965, through which Asians were admitted in far larger numbers, Lawrence aligns himself in opposition to the “Progressive Protestant Patriots,” or centre-rightists, by revising multi-culturalism into the more ethnically edifying “kaleidoculture,” a term coined with emphasis upon intrinsic group worth. Through this, he interestingly speculates that the world may one day be incapable of seeing Asian Americans “not
because they are part of a single homogeneous culture but because America itself will have been redefined as a kaleidoscope, a polyvalent kaliedoculture” (139–40). What emerges is a work which deftly skirts around any discussion of the religions themselves but sharply focuses upon the practitioners, in isolation and as amalgamated Americans.

Rightly citing the weight which is placed upon Chinese, Korean, and Japanese American studies at the expense of South and South-East Asian Americans (xiv), Lawrence nevertheless glosses over the postcolonial complexities of the Near and Middle East (conflated regions in New Faiths) by reterming the areas “Western Asia” in a somewhat hasty bid to demarcate the continent as ontologically and etymologically non-Europe centred, issues such as the question of Turkish political and cultural (re)identity being left unexamined. There is thus a slight tension between Lawrence’s laudable attempt at making the Muslim presence within Asian American Studies as solid as it is becoming in American daily life and his projection of this ethno-disciplinary unity upon a region stretching in all its diversity from the Bosporus to the Pacific. Although some sections remain solidly focused, such as his investigation into Iranian immigrants in chapter 4, which reveals that “their attachment to their home country remains just that, an attachment to the past, not a strategy for return” (94), in large part a great deal more is attempted than can be accomplished in the space given. African Muslims, Buddhism and Sikhism, communications (Internet, television, and CD-ROM), and the evolution of the Asian American discipline all feature at times as sub-fields of enquiry which deserve expansion. Perhaps for this reason Lawrence’s conclusion is primarily descriptive and predictive and the greatest strength of New Faiths remains its power to pose questions without rushing answers.

DANIEL MCKAY


Louisiana’s “chemical corridor” is an eighty-mile stretch between Baton Rouge and the mouth of the Mississippi that emits 129 million pounds of toxins per year. Steve Lerner’s Diamond tells the story of how one particular African American community endured and resisted the combined impact of traditional southern “racially based land-use planning” and the multinational corporate might of the petrochemical industry. In 1916 Royal Dutch/Shell built a refinery near Belltown, a community established by ex-slaves; in 1953 the corporation bought up the land in Belltown itself. The displaced residents regrouped in nearby Diamond, but found themselves sandwiched between two massive Shell complexes. Over the next three generations an alarming proportion of Diamond’s denizens experienced serious health problems. In the 1990s a cadre led by one Marge Richard decided that enough was enough – as one resident-cum-activist put it, “I have been sucking up Shell’s shit for fifty years” – and took the battle to Shell.
From inauspicious beginnings, this battle gradually drew in regional organizations like the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and national groups such as Citizens for a Better Environment. But crucially Diamond confronted Shell, the world’s tenth-largest multinational corporation, in its own global sphere. Richard travelled to Nigeria to learn about Shell’s notorious involvement in atrocities against the Ogoni people, and began planning a “delta to delta” project linking Shell’s actions in Nigeria and Louisiana. In 2001 Richard flew to The Hague, the home town of Royal Dutch/Shell, to present executives with polluted air and water samples from Diamond and the Niger Delta. Within two weeks “a top Shell executive from London was knocking on [Richard’s] trailer door in Diamond,” and in March 2002 Shell finally agreed to relocate the whole community (albeit without admitting that this decision had anything to do with pollution).

As an environmental activist whose brother became involved in the negotiations between Diamond residents, their allies, and Shell, Lerner’s position is hardly neutral. Yet he is commendably even-handed, detailing the gradual shift in Shell’s position and acknowledging that some “[c]redit is due to Shell’s managers” for listening, however belatedly, to Diamond’s residents’ complaints. Lerner also interviews prominent white residents of Norco who consistently supported (and, not coincidentally, worked for) Shell. This care to present all facets of the story makes for an occasionally repetitive narrative. Ultimately, however, Diamond is a detailed and compelling case study that demonstrates the need for solidarity between the established civil-rights movement and the emerging environmental-justice movement. Such activism is even more crucial at a time when the Bush administration has relaxed state regulation of the petrochemical industry and restricted the public release of information about petrochemical plants on the premise that such data could be used by terrorists.

University of Copenhagen

MARTYN BONE


Zebulon Baird Vance is one of the few political leaders from nineteenth-century North Carolina to remain active in historical memory. As governor from September 1862 until the South’s collapse in April 1865, Vance’s durability mainly results from his reputation as a so-called states rights opponent of the Davis government (where he is invariably bracketed with his fellow governor Joseph Brown of Georgia). However, as Gordon McKinney’s excellent new biography confirms, the reputation is unfounded; Vance was anything but an anti-Confederate obstructionist. Elected to gubernatorial office at the age of thirty-two after a spell in the army, he fought to sustain North Carolina’s contribution to the war effort even while seeking to protect the state’s citizens from the insensitivity and incompetence of Confederate policymakers and bureaucrats. McKinney especially succeeds in delineating the complex political environment in which Vance operated as the state’s chief executive, and his
deft analysis is a salutary reminder, if one were needed, of the extent to which familiar politics was sustained in an era that saw the suspension of formal partisan competition. Re-elected in 1864 with a large majority—his defeated opponent was the irrepressible William W. Holden—Vance spent the remainder of the war ensuring that his state “maintained its tie to the dying rebellion even when discretion might have suggested another course” (231). At stake, according to the author, was Tarheel honour: Vance was adamant that North Carolina, where opposition to Richmond had been visibly pronounced, would not be held responsible, in whole or in part, for the Confederacy’s collapse.

The blood of partisanship ran thickly through Vance’s veins. After a period of inevitable quietude (including forty-seven days imprisonment), Vance re-emerged at the end of the 1860s as a major figure in the state’s redeemer politics. In 1876 a momentous election sealed the Democratic Party’s control of the state for the next century and propelled the former Whig back into the governor’s mansion in Raleigh. Two years later Vance ascended to the national stage when he was elected to the US Senate, serving there until his death in April 1894. Gordon McKinney gives full narrative weight to this less well-known aspect of Zeb Vance’s career, including an insightful account of his opposition to reform of the spoils system. Critical of Vance’s racism and acknowledging other flaws in his make-up, McKinney has etched a persuasive and surely definitive portrait of this significant nineteenth-century political figure.

**Keele University**

MARTIN CRAWFORD


Rather surprisingly, John F. Marszalek’s is the first full biography of Halleck. Much has, of course, been written about him, but most has concentrated on the Civil War years. In this volume, however, the author takes us from Halleck’s birth into a landed family in New York State in 1814, through his military training at West Point, his early career as a military engineer and writer of the seminal text *Elements of Military Art and Science* (1846), his battlefield prowess in skirmishes in California during the Mexican War and subsequent role as its military secretary of state before statehood, and his successes as lawyer and businessman in the San Francisco area during the 1850s. The heart of the biography, naturally, takes us through Halleck’s part in the Civil War with several chapters devoted to his command of the Western Theatre, his years as general-in-chief, and the final months when he served as chief of staff under U.S. Grant. The biography concludes with a glimpse of his final years as, first, commander on the Pacific coast and then in command of the Division of the South at the height of the Reconstruction era.

Much of what appears here confirms the traditional portrait of Halleck as an outstanding administrator but a poor leader who, when given overall command by the president, failed to exert decisive leadership. But by giving us a much fuller
picture of Halleck’s virtually unbroken success before the war, Marszalek has brought his subject’s tragedy into starker relief. Here was a man with unsurpassed theoretical knowledge of the conduct of warfare whose military and professional careers had flourished but who, when invited to take the position of general-in-chief, failed, a victim of his own temperamental, psychological and physical weaknesses. The irony is that when the largely organizational position of chief of staff was found for him, he was in his element, but by then irreparable damage had been done to his contemporary (and subsequent) reputation as well as to his health.

Painstakingly researched, well written and judicious in its approach, this volume offers the reader valuable insights into the foundation years of the state of California and penetrative analysis of the unstable nature of the command structure of the Union during the war, as well as providing us with what will surely be the standard biography of Halleck for many years to come.

Liverpool Hope University College

FRANK LENNON


The Second World War was a watershed event for American Jews, in terms of both self-identity and their relationship with broader American society. For first- or second-generation immigrants who had fled European pogroms, returning to the Old World as GIs was a particularly wrenching experience, as they encountered the effects of Nazi barbarity from the privileged position of conquerors and occupiers. In her useful new book *GI Jews: How World War II Changed a Generation*, Deborah Dash Moore maintains that “military service ... empowered Jews as Americans and as Jews, and secured their future” (259).

Moore presents a strong case for the first part of her thesis: that service in the US military strengthened the American identity of recent Jewish immigrants. *GI Jews* is an oral history centred on members of the Dragons, a Jewish social and athletic club in Brooklyn, New York. Although members of this mostly lower middle-class immigrant community were enthusiastic consumers of American pop culture – like baseball and Hollywood movies – they lived in a homogeneous environment. Most of their neighbours were Jews of similar socioeconomic status. Joining the US Army “transported them to sections of the United States they barely knew existed” (48), and exposed these young men to a broader swathe of American society. Mutual incomprehension, prejudice and anti-Semitism often made this initial plunge into the unfamiliar very unpleasant. But the US military was aware of these problems. In the most impressive section of her study, Moore describes how the military sought to mould men from disparate backgrounds into a uniform force, and to differentiate “American values” from those of the Axis. It did so by officially propagating the concept of a common “Judeo-Christian tradition” (121), emphasizing ecumenical worship and contrasting American pluralism with enemy chauvinism. Jews were
assigned an honourable, equal place in the military’s “Judeo-Christian” formulation, and it helped cement their place in the American mainstream.

Given this integrationist ethos, Moore’s contention that military service also strengthened Jews’ identity as Jews is more questionable. While Jewish holidays were recognized and worship encouraged, the official emphasis was not on how this signified Jewish distinctiveness but on how they formed an integral part of the American creed. Furthermore, while Moore documents many individual instances of anti-Semitism, official discrimination against Jews hardly existed. Unlike blacks, who were segregated and often assigned menial tasks, military service empowered Jews and confirmed their place in American society. The rapid increase in inter-marriage during the post-war era is surely strong evidence that, for most Jews and Gentiles, Judaism had become an unexceptional ingredient in the American “melting pot.”

University of Edinburgh

T. C. WALES


Teaching the history of slavery and the slave trade properly, even if you confine it to the British trade, is reliant on the ready supply of a vast array of documents with wide geographical and temporal provenance. Although the Internet has facilitated access to this variety of texts, the publication of these marvellously edited and produced volumes finally gives libraries and scholars ready access to authoritative facsimile versions of seminal documents from both sides of the slave trade debate such as Thomas Clarkson’s The Substance of the Evidence of Sundry Persons on the Slave Trade (1789) and Capt. Macarty’s An Appeal to the Candour and Justice of the People of England in Behalf of the West Indian Merchants and Planters (1792). Each volume is edited by key scholars in the field whose volume introductions are dynamic scholarly interventions in their own right. Robin Law on “The Operation of the Slave Trade in Britain” (vol. 1), Kevin Morgan on The Royal African Company (vol. 2), John Oldfield on “The Abolitionist Struggle: Opponents of the Slave Trade” (vol. 3) and David Ryden on “The Abolitionist Struggle: Promoters of the Slave Trade” (vol. 4) carefully elucidate the dynamics of the trade and its abolition so that all of the primary sources are properly contextualized and connections between texts usefully elucidated. It is particularly interesting to have Gomer Williams’s History of the Liverpool Privaters and Letters of Marque, with an Account of the Liverpool Slave Trade excerpted here with its graphic account of African commercial acumen that gives the lie to narrow interpretations of Africans as victims. This wonderful correspondence in pidgin brings alive the close commercial relationship between British and West African merchants and will be a boon to academics striving to complicate over-simplified narratives that abound in the field. The major omission in the volumes is that there are no other black-authored texts. Obviously, the pioneering work of Paul Edwards in the 1960s and Vincent Carretta more recently has made accessible important texts such as Ottabah Cugoana and Olaudah Equiano’s anti-slavery
polemics so that they are now generally available; however, there are other
interesting texts such as James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw’s 1772 Narrative of the
Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of an African Prince . . . , published in Bath, which
could have enhanced the collection by offering a critical African perspective on
slave-trading and a black British context for the abolitionist texts re-published here.
Kenneth Morgan elucidates how the “texts reproduced (here) . . . provide
researchers with a valuable corpus of contemporary material with which to evaluate
the practice of the British slave trade and the reasons for its demise.” The gathering
together of such diverse materials is truly a boon to scholars and these volumes will
be cheerfully thumbed for years to come.

University of Central Lancashire

ALAN RICE


Wilson Jeremiah Moses, Creative Conflict in African American Thought (Cambridge:
0 521 53337 9.

This intellectually rigorous and combative study focuses on the sophistication of,
and problems within, the thought of five major African American intellectuals:
Frederick Douglass, Alexander Crummell, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois
and Marcus Garvey. In Theodore Roosevelt’s Darwinian notion of the “strenuous
life” any individual who was not struggling was weak and unfit for survival. The five
thinkers addressed in these pages celebrated their own august conception of the
“strenuous life” as a permanent feature of worthwhile human conduct, for they
believed moral fitness to be inseparable from constant moral struggle. These
personalities illustrate, according to Professor Moses, the dynamic and generative
powers of contradiction and the enabling effects of struggle in African American
thought during the so-called “progressive era.” The friction caused by the person-
ality and ideology conflicts has led to the popular conceptions of these figures as
secular saints, traitors or charlatans, conceptions that still haunt undergraduate
essays focusing on the years between 1885 and 1923 the dates of the
Douglass–Crummell confrontation at Harper’s Ferry and the Du Bois–Garvey
conflict in Harlem.

The five complex individuals who form the subject of this book were selected on
the basis of their self-evident, and sometimes glaring, inconsistencies. These have
either been smothered by overzealous admirers, or seized upon by their bitter
adversaries among past and present African American intellectuals. While some
commentators venerate Alexander Crummell as the proud “father of Pan-
Africanism,” others view him as an advocate of European cultural hegemony.
W.E.B. Du Bois could be elevated as the principle black intellectual of the twentieth
century; Moses examines how this seemingly unassailable position in the pantheon
of African American heroes has been threatened by a number of recent readings that
construct Du Bois as “an embarrassment, an elitist snob” (xiv), who from pure
malice joined the Communist Party and acted as apologist for the casual brutalities
of Stalin.
The final chapters are the most eloquent and persuasive. Moses addresses the cultural phenomenon of Garveyism, its strident emphasis on the circulation of information, the forming of opinion, the deft manipulation of images so as to challenge Europe’s emotional subordination of Africa. Moses reveals how the discordance between Garvey’s racial orientation and his eurocentric style of self-presentation reflected his canny awareness of the urgent necessity to assimilate the values of industrial capitalism and his respect for traditions of English literacy. Imbuing all this discussion is the fascinating, ever-present conflict between the rhetoric of individual morality and the exhortations towards collective reform.

University of Glasgow

ANDREW RADFORD


When Frances Trollope left Fanny Wright’s failed utopian community at Nashoba, Tennessee, she travelled to Cincinnati in order to set up a store selling luxury goods to its newly settled middle class. As we know well, Mrs. Trollope, a contemporary and social equal of Jane Austen, was distinctly unimpressed by her experiences of the manners and domestic arrangements of her American clients. Published in 1832, her Domestic Manners of the Americans is one of the earliest widely read accounts of the way citizens of the United States housed themselves and lived their lives and, 170 years later, settling and commerce remain the two aspects of the American middle class that Americanists most frequently seek to understand and redefine. The strength of Marina Moskowtiz’s welcome addition to this body of work lies in the author’s choice of particular case studies, through which the book seeks to discover the role of material culture in defining the American middle class at the beginning of the last century.

In taking the micro-domestic – and therefore coded as feminine – subjects of dishware and bathroom fittings, along with the traditionally male-centred matters of prefabricated housing and zoning, giving each a chapter of its own, Moskowitz not only deals with the complex gendered dynamic of life in subdivisions, but manages to give a truly national character to her book, where many works on suburbanization and its discontents are happy to see the sphere of their argument limited to Levittown and the exurbs of California. As Moskowitz convincingly argues, newly affluent people throughout the republic were able to gain a foothold on middle-class life by engaging in the small-scale, gradual gentrification of their own homes and households. The new technology of electroplating encouraged the rejection of chipped crockery hand-me-downs in favour of the purchase of new flatware that could symbolize a family’s mealtime unity and which magazines and etiquette books promoted as potentially valuable heirlooms. In tracing the spread of such desirables through the newly zoned residential tracts of America, the author shows how many of the home comforts of today had their beginnings as bought totems through
which a previous generation of Americans sought to define themselves, and their neighbours, as members of a brand-new, consumer-oriented, social class.

**University of Sussex**

**JOE KENNEDY**


A well-covered topic in recent years, Martha Jane Nadell brings a fresh approach to the study of “the New Negro.” Nadell’s account explores the debate among African American artists about African American identity: what or who were the New Negroes, and how best to represent them? What is new about Nadell’s work is that it examines how and why a number of African American writers and artists from the 1920s to the 1940s used visual images alongside text to represent black Americans, at a time when illustrated material, once an American literary staple, was in general decline.

Drawing on the work of W.J.T. Mitchell, Nadell rejects the search for a singular theory to explain the relationship between word and image in African American print culture. Rather her study explores a range of what she calls “interartistic texts” including magazines, collections of poetry and non-fiction works. Before the “New Negro” is allowed to “enter,” Nadell first presents the literary and visual stereotypes of the “Old Negro” as depicted by authors Harriet Beecher Stowe and Thomas Dixon and illustrators E.W. Kemble and A.B. Frost in the nineteenth century. According to Nadell this examination of white depictions of “Uncle Tom” or “Old Mammy” is crucial to understanding how African American artists and writers chose to represent the black experience, since much of the cultural production of the 1920s onwards is a reaction to the use of the stereotype.

In March 1925 the Howard Professor and philosopher Alain Locke edited a one-off “Negro” edition of the social-work journal *Survey Graphic*, which he later expanded into an anthology entitled *The New Negro*. While the two editions are in many ways similar, Nadell explores the significance of the changes that Locke did make, particularly regarding the positioning of text and image. While the journal issue had relied on the realist portraiture of the German-born Winold Reiss, the book version also included the modernist depictions of American life by Aaron Douglas. For Nadell the combination of these two very different artists reflects Locke’s New Negro aesthetic: the denial of the stereotype by highlighting the heterogeneity of the black experience.

This approach forms the crux of *Enter the New Negroes*. Nadell explores well-trodden texts in African American literature but asks important questions about the often neglected visual images employed. Other texts examined include the one-off journals *Fire!!* and *Harlem* produced by the renegade Wallace Thurman, as well as Zora Neale Hurston’s collection of southern folklore *Mules and Men*, which used illustrations by the Mexican caricaturist Miguel Covarrubias to cast doubt on the value of scientific anthropology in representing the black experience. Interartistic
texts produced by collaborations in the 1940s between Richard Wright and the photographers of the Farm Security Administration, as well as Langston Hughes and Jacob Lawrence, are also examined.

What unites these authors and visual artists, who at first glance seem to have little in common, is their insistence on the heterogeneity of the black experience in America, and a belief that this is part of what it means to represent black Americans in art. While Nadell applauds Locke for his willingness to engage with diverse representations of the black experience, Nadell equally should be applauded for her skilful handling of both visual and textual representations and for raising important, but hitherto neglected, questions about how these two forms interact, in a way that must change the way in which we read familiar texts.

University of Leeds

KATE DOSSETT


This is a wonderful book that encourages new and engaging ways of approaching some appalling material, particularly the geography of extermination. Mapping out the control potential of enclosures first for animals and then for humans-treated-as-animals, Netz explores our ambivalence about modernity, its potentials so finely balanced between heaven and hell. Fearing that this might be little more than a deterministic narrative through the period from 1874 to 1954 (barbed wire as the corrupting key to modernity's promise), I was relieved to find that while exploring its absolute potentials as a physical, pain-inducing barrier (from the ranges of the American West to the forests of Nazi Poland) Netz uses the application of barbed wire as a way to explore spatial manipulations under often quite different systems – range capitalism, Nazi occupation and the Soviet Gulag – systems that while quite different are nevertheless linked in their willingness to manipulate man, beast and nature in grandiose schemes. Throughout, the physical and symbolic aspects of containment are both recognized and explored. As someone particularly concerned with landscapes this was reassuring, for it takes the physicality of place seriously rather than as an aesthetic gloss.

Modernity is often considered through the lens of movement: the train, the car, the rocket. Even a static Chrysler Building implies motion to the stars and beyond. But modernity was equally concerned with containment. Technologies such as barbed wire sought to include and to exclude, to turn a line on the ground into an actively including/excluding agent of change, from “home on the range” through to those German cities proudly declaring themselves “Judenrein.” This provides a compelling re-examination of still vibrant issues: capitalism, colonialism, globalization and war. But this equally leads to my only disappointment that by its own self-limiting terms Netz cannot address the very implications he heralds. I kept expecting him to follow through on the walled division of Berlin, and latterly the West Bank, clearly places where the processes of inclusion and exclusion continue, ideology given physical expression on the ground, where even barbed wire became
redundant with ever more sophisticated technologies. And in an era when all the technologies available to the USA seem unable to maintain its southern border against thousands of illegal arrivals, and were unable to contain US airspace around the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the irony of so much technology, so little control seems strangely unexplored.

Keele University

STEPHEN F. MILLS


This is not a book solely about poetry. While some of its best essays are on that subject, the word poetics used here in its multivalent sense as Agata Preis-Smith and Marek Paryz state in the introduction, “that at the core of the poetics of America, there is the interpenetration of different discourses and media.” The text is a collaboration between the members of the Department of American Literature at the University of Warsaw and former Fulbright Professors in Poland and Germany. The interdisciplinary range of subjects from such a varied group of scholars is one of the title’s strengths and it offers four sections of essays that reflect this variation in interests: “Signifying Landscapes,” “Horizons of American Poetry,” “Focus on Prose” and “Constructing Ethnic Poetics.”

“Signifying Landscapes” contains fascinating insights into such topics as technology’s problematizing of artistic realism since the late nineteenth century, “imperial zeal” and “colonial anxiety” in Whitman’s poetry, the attempt of the American Guide Series to portray a “harmoniously diverse country” while actually reinscribing racial stereotypes for tourist consumption, and the general late twentieth century novelistic urge to view the city as a space of alienation. Thus the section as a whole plots some important points on the map of America’s artistic reproduction of itself in the last two centuries.

Following “Signifying Landscapes” are “Horizons of American Poetry” and “Focus on Prose.” Both sections are varied and wide-ranging. The former ranges from work on Whitman to the emergence of e-poetry in the computer age, while the latter features new takes on Faulkner and Dreiser and looks at both the graphic novel and autobiography. The essay “Walt Whitman: The Co(s)mic Poet. Unfixing Nature in the Song of Myself” is the highlight of these sections. Against D.H. Lawrence’s chastising that “as soon as Walt knew a thing he assumed a One identity with it,” Mikolaj Wiśniewski argues that Whitman is fully aware of his own playing with the notion of the orphic poet and subsequently he adds his own comic bravado and irony to his engulfing of the world.

The final section, “Constructing Ethnic Poetics,” probes for marginal voice and signification within the literature of America’s minority communities. The essays here range across Polish, Chicano/a Asian and Native American works. Joanna Ziarkowska’s closing essay, “Photographs in Leslie Marmon Silko’s Storyteller: A Dialogue of the Past and Present,” brings a symmetry to the book as a whole,
concentrating on alternative “signifying landscapes” which “counter the cliché of Indians as a perished tribe and present them in a contemporary context.” The book succeeds then in its whole as well as its parts, offering both insights to the specialist scholar and a varied and playful read for the interdisciplinary Americanist.

University of Glasgow

JOHN ARMSTRONG


In 1969 ABC television introduced Room 222, a weekly series than ran six years. In it an African American history teacher guided his racially and ethnically diverse students through the problems of contemporary America: drugs, poverty, teenage pregnancy, war and so on. While its setting in Los Angeles could easily be forgotten by the viewer, the school’s name, Walt Whitman High, was constantly repeated. Ol’ Walt’s vision of the United States could get us through the problems of the day. This book implies what that series ignored — that Walt’s influence is not all that simple and never was.

This book comprises six narrowly focused chapters that explore Whitman’s impact on a group of authors or, in the case of the last essay, filmmakers. So although they collectively do not comprise “America,” each is thoughtful and provocative. The first, “Whitman in Blackface,” discusses his influence on African American, Native American and nineteenth-century New England literary traditions. The following three examine his influence on Edith Wharton, elements of his influence in England, and three artists of the 1920s (John Dos Passos, Ben Shahn and Bernard Malamud). The fifth chapter returns to the consideration of black and Native American authors and the final piece examines the numerous references to Whitman in film. This last piece is a superb example of interdisciplinary work and is the strongest essay of the group.

However, Price offers interesting insights throughout all the essays. His dissection of Gloria Naylor’s Linden Hills ought to have the good effect of making that work better known and better understood. Price is also persuasive in his treatment of the complex influence that Whitman had on Wharton. The film chapter is the most synoptic but the discussion of Bull Durham and Down By Law is useful if, by design, brief. Unfortunately, he dismisses the recent film that uses Whitman most extensively, Dead Poets Society. Whilst it has many weaknesses, it was quite influential on the American public in its time and so deserves more consideration.

But more important than this omission is that Price fails to draw his specific points together into an overarching theme or themes. In the introduction he raises the question of Whitman’s relevance to the debate on multiculturalism but he never offers an answer as to what his relevance might be; there is plenty of evidence here for what could be a fascinating and important argument on this central figure of American civilization.

University of Kent

GEORGE CONYNE
Eithne Quinn's account and analysis of “classic” gangsta rap in the period from 1988 to 1996 examines the work of such performers as Ice Cube, Snoop Dogg, Dr Dre, and Tupac Shakur. Her stated (and restated) aims are to demonstrate the stylistic vitality and complexity of the genre and its socioeconomic contexts, and to convey “the power and pleasure of the gangsta phenomenon.” Rappers, she contends, ingeniously expressed both the realities of the decaying urban environment and the aspirations of dispossessed black youth. That they also enjoyed enormous commercial success – as well as rejection by “conservatives” – is said to illustrate “an expressive response to the deindustrialization, right wing policies, and market liberalization that had been draining away productive resources from America’s urban centers since the 1970s.” Such critics of African American culture as Robin D.G. Kelley, S. Craig Watkins, and Barry Shank have commended Nuthin’ but a “G” Thang as the most informed, provocative, and insightful treatment of the topic to date. It is hard to share their enthusiasm. It is equally hard to decipher Quinn’s convoluted, jargon-ridden, and sterile prose – a problem not made any easier by numerous typographical errors: “coms” for “comes”, “wrung” for “rung”. I found large stretches of this book unintelligible or simply facile. For example, the high visibility of branded products in the movie Boys ‘N the Hood, and Ice Cube’s endorsement of St. Ides malt liquor, are said to represent “the superseding of commodified authenticity with a new subcultural articulation of authentic commodification.” What does this mean? Again, the reflection that “in the mixed-up, no-guarantees world of neo-liberal America, gangsta rap was energized politically by the rejection of collective protest strategies and the embrace of a ruthless drive for profit” hardly ranks as a profound historical or aesthetic judgement.

Elsewhere, Quinn concedes that “the abusive devaluation of female characters is a central gangsta theme,” but dilutes this observation with the claim that “in misogynist rap there lies the tacit acknowledgement of women’s power and importance.” Nuthin’ but a “G” Thang makes an unconvincing, inflated, and repetitive case for the “political” and social significance of gangsta rap. Its brutality, rhetorical violence, and musical sterility are never seriously or objectively considered. This reviewer applauds bell hook’s typification (quoted by Quinn) that African American rappers were “labouring in the plantations of misogyny and sexism.” Other (and younger?) readers of this deeply “engaged” book may disagree. Perhaps it’s a generational thang.

Emeritus Reader in American History, University of Hull

JOHN WHITE
Eliza Richards’s *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe’s Circle* explores the intersection of the poetics of creation and reception, focusing on a circle of women poets—Sarah Helen Whitman, Elizabeth Oakes Smith and Frances Sargent Osgood—with whom Poe shared a transactional literary relationship. The book is meticulously researched. Richards has drawn together an impressive amount of detail about the social networks and gendered values of the literary marketplace governing the transmission of poetry in nineteenth-century America.

She carefully evaluates the poetry itself and the most relevant contemporary and posthumous criticism by and of Poe, Whitman, Smith and Osgood, arguing persuasively that these prominent women poets served as models and stimuli for Poe’s literary production as much as, if not more than, he served as a referent for their work. The book highlights how the gendering of nineteenth-century American poetry, which identified the “feminine” with creativity and poetic genius, presented male poets with a dilemma, for if men were to retain their supremacy in the literary establishment, then a way to dissociate the “feminine” from real women needed to be found.

The book elucidates how Poe went about this task. Richards discusses his poetry as a performative instance of the “feminine,” a kind of poetic drag act that impersonates in order to curb and colonize women’s poetic voices. Poe’s role as critical friend to women poets is examined as well, for example, the way in which he uses his editorial position to write himself between the more popular Osgood and her readership. By positioning himself as the intended romantic recipient of her lyrics, Poe reduces Osgood’s work to the “natural” expression of a woman’s heart and, as such, he implicitly questions its literary value by dividing it from the more privileged and masculinized forms of literary production ostensibly marked by reason and selection.

In four chapters Richards traces the historical critical process through which Poe has come to stand as the sign of the woman poet at the expense of his contemporary female writers, whose contributions to his work, and the significance of their work in terms of the development of an American poetic tradition, has been almost totally obscured. Thus the book makes a much-needed intervention in the masculinist critical practices that have characterized many studies of Poe. In addition, its subject matter, combined with the author’s ability to present a complex subject with wonderful clarity, means that the book will appeal broadly to beginning as well as advanced readers in gender studies, women’s literary history and American cultural studies.

This study, a volume in the Routledge Frontiers of Political Economy Series, argues that the Clinton and Blair administrations consolidated and completed critical aspects of the Reagan and Thatcher fiscal agendas. Written by two economists, it is a challenging read for those who might find the dismal science not wholly accessible but it is rewarding and stimulating to anyone with an interest in political economy. The authors do not suggest uniformity between the conservative and centrist regimes under study but argue that the neoliberal beliefs which were their common bond allowed them to pursue differing priorities. They are particularly good at explaining the theoretical rationale of political-belief analysis as a better instrument for understanding public policy than rational choice theory and in their appreciation of core beliefs and secondary beliefs. That said, there are a number of matters with which more political studies-minded scholars might take issue.

First, the linkage between Reagan and Clinton is difficult to swallow. Reagan’s political economy was driven first and foremost by the need to reduce taxes as a means both to stimulate the economy and to force government retrenchment. Clinton’s, by contrast, sought to balance the budget at high revenue levels that permitted substantial expenditure on domestic programs of human investment that fitted the new Democrat policy mould. In many respects, too, it can be argued that Clinton’s policy was empirical and pragmatic rather than belief-driven, exemplified by his 1993 switch of priorities from his investment program to deficit reduction.

Second, the authors make little attempt to explain the intensity of political conflict between the Clinton administration and the Newt Gingrich-led Republicans over fiscal issues. Clinton’s adoption of the balanced-budget issue (as opposed to mere deficit reduction) in the mid-1990s was in part a matter of political calculation in the strategy of triangulation to outflank Republican charges that the new Democrats were just old tax-and-spend liberals. More attention might also have been given to just how important deficit reduction was in promoting the 1990s boom in view of recent dissenting comments by Clinton’s own economic adviser, Joseph Stiglitz.

Nevertheless, even if one disagrees with the authors, their thesis is provocative and illuminating. Their work merits a wider audience than it will probably get, not because of the quality of their work but because of the extortionate price charged by the publisher for their book. In these straitened times, courtesy of the left veering right, university libraries have to balk at being bilked.

*Institute for the Study of the Americas*
In the twentieth century developments in reproductive technology and trials in new forms of birth control affected the relationship between researchers, physicians, the state and women. Birth control was identified as a solution to the problem of dependence on welfare, as the state sought ways to find biological solutions to social problems. Between 1929 and 1975 the North Carolina Eugenics Board authorized 8,000 sterilizations, often selecting candidates for the procedure on the basis of race, class and gender stereotypes. Many women actively sought sterilization as an effective form of birth control. The same procedure that increased state control over women’s bodies allowed women to control their own reproductive destinies. Attitudes towards mental illness led to many men and women, girls and boys, being sterilized for their own “protection” and for that of the gene pool of the general population. While mental deficiency was believed to be hereditary, the threat of inappropriate sexual behaviour also drove those who made decisions on sterilization. Before the early 1950s, when more medical solutions to the problems of mental illness arrived, sterilization presented a short-term cover up for the potential problems such patients presented to society.

This volume combines the study of sterilization and birth control trials in North Carolina with the history of abortion in the United States, and successfully connects the problems faced by women in the United States with those faced by women around the world, using Puerto Rico and India as case studies. The economic and cultural contexts in which families make choices about family size, and the identity and place of women within debates on abortion, are carefully and sensitively analysed. Schoen draws comparisons with the contemporary situation in the United States, and asks how much has changed in the last five decades concerning public attitudes to women’s reproductive rights. Choice and Coercion directly faces the challenge of studying a history of attitudes, emotions and private decisions, while also tracing the development of public policy and reproductive technology. By studying the attitudes of the professionals who formed and implemented policies and examining the point of view of the individuals who were the subjects of this policy, Schoen successfully reveals what has been a misunderstood history of the agency and coercion involved in the relationship between women’s bodies and the state. This book is a valuable contribution to the history of medicine, public health and welfare, women’s rights and the impact of state policy on individual women and their families in the United States and around the world.

University of Cambridge

JENNIFER BLACK

The editor of this volume is to be congratulated for assembling case studies of sugar cultivation in six different regions of the Caribbean and Latin America that challenge fuzzy scholarship of the commodity’s early history: Vieira (on Madeira and the Canaries), Morel (Española), De La Fuente (Cuba), McCusker and Menard (Barbados) and Schwartz himself (Brazil). Time and again one reads that prevailing assumptions about the nature of the plantation system and its relationship with slave labour are wrong or misconceived. The chapters are generally well-laid out and clearly expressed. The meaning of *trapeiche* and *ingenios* seems to vary between regions; there were opportunities for editorial comment and cross-referencing by the authors here. Overall, however, the material presented is thought-provoking and important. McCusker and Menard’s contribution is most interesting. The new perspective they present is of a slower-paced transformation of Barbados, a downplaying of Dutch influences and an emphasis on the inward investment of London merchants. It would be interesting to explore Barbadian involvement in Dutch colonial settlements, particularly present-day Guiana, if the authors are correct in arguing that the critical decades were the 1650s and 1660s. An appendix grapples with the problem of commodity money; some of the results presented depend critically on conversion assumptions detailed here. The volume also includes two contributions from Klein (the Atlantic slave trade pre-1650) and Stols (European consumption of sugar). Klein provides a valuable summary, though loosely tied to sugar, for as he writes in the first paragraph, during its first century and a half “the slave trade evolved independently of the expansion of the sugar economy” (p.201). Stols likewise makes useful points, particularly with respect to the Antwerp market; he too adopts a survey approach in contrast to the case studies of the chapters addressing production. The book is dedicated to the memory of two fine scholars: Manuel Moreno Fraginals and José António Gonçales De Mello. It is also beautifully illustrated with twelve well-chosen image reproductions.

*S. D. SMITH

University of York*
one so very necessary and valuable. The past, as the editors note, “keeps changing,” and with this in mind they have constructed a collection that has been designed to present the Civil War as it is studied in the twenty-first century (xix). One aspect of its twenty-first-century provenance is the need the editors feel to spell out, very clearly and with twenty-first-century students firmly in mind, exactly what this collection represents: neither a trade book (“something you typically read for fun”) nor a “typical textbook,” nor, indeed, an anthology of sources; it is instead “a textbook anthology of sources … a big repository of … information,” both primary and secondary (xxi). The editors are equally concerned to highlight what the volume does not include; neither foreign policy nor the role of technology nor the naval war is explored in any depth, in part because to cover everything would result in an unwieldy collection, but largely because the editors are attempting to provide some corrective to the scholarship of the last 150 years that has “generally involved some very traditional topics; politics, military affairs, and every once in a while, economic and social issues.” Their focus is on “some of the more recent trends in academic scholarship,” including social and cultural history, with their emphasis on “everyday life rather than that of leading political figures” and on “widely shared ideas rather than exclusively those of major intellectuals” (xxii).

The student reader may appreciate the carefully phrased guidance; course leaders, by contrast, may chafe against the parameters being outlined in a volume designed to encourage independent thought, and may also find the rather broad-ranging “questions to consider” inserted throughout the text more of a hindrance than a help in seminar discussion. The attempt to challenge the biases of earlier scholarship is also sometimes clumsy and overstated. To note, for example, that “it is generally assumed that the Civil War was fought by men” makes little sense in the context of a war that was generally fought by men (91). It is important to be aware of the fact that some women bore arms, but more important to recognize – as much of the recent scholarship does – that the link between home and battlefront, male and female, combatant and non-combatant was crucial to the war effort North and South. In the main, however, the wealth of material here weathers the occasionally intrusive editorial interventions and represents an extraordinarily rich teaching resource. Competitively priced against Michael Perman’s *Major Problems in the Civil War and Reconstruction* volume, it also incorporates a far broader range of scholarship on the war, from Bruce Catton through George Fredrickson, Drew Gilpin Faust, David Blight, James McPherson, Jean Attie and Alice Fahs, and introduces students to material as varied as Calhoun’s Speech on the Compromise of 1850, Mary Chesnut’s *Diary* and Walt Whitman’s *Drum Taps*. The pulling together of all this material into one coherent volume represents a considerable editorial achievement, and one that highlights not just the most recent scholarly approaches to the Civil War but also some of the reasons for the subject’s perennial fascination for students, academics and the (predominantly American) public alike.

*University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*  

S-M. Grant

In a recent television advert for Levi’s jeans – that most American of brands – a street-smart youth is shown delivering some of Bottom’s lines from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, walking past a group of youths towards a denim-enthralled café—cleaning Titania. Successfully fusing one of the primary cultural icons of the “American century” with a little-known playwright from Stratford-upon-Avon, this recent addition to the Levi’s advertising canon suggests that Shakespeare is as American as the label that emerged two hundred years after his birth. It is the paradoxical yet conscious fusion of American values with the Englishness of the Bard that Kim C. Sturgess seeks to unravel in his ethnographic examination of Shakespeare and the American nation.

Sturgess has set about to tell the story of America’s relationship with Shakespeare – to provide reasons for how and why Shakespeare became a cultural hero for a nation (ambiguously posited as the world’s only “superculture”) so determinedly anti-English. Sturgess approaches this task by reading various cultural interactions between America and Shakespeare against the context of the relationship that existed between England and America. The cultural interactions examined cover various points – the textual editions of Shakespeare issued by American publishers, the theatrical controversies relating to audience “participation” concerning opinions offered by English thespians, the keen desire of Americans to present their own understandings of Shakespeare as the more linguistically valid interpretation thus avoiding the intellectual imperialism of English academics, the attempt to portray Shakespeare as an identity created by a number of individuals concerned with a nascent republicanism, the creation of a memory industry at Stratford-upon-Avon and the role that Americans played in creating a cultural heritage site and tourist destination there, the numerous reproductions of the Globe Theatre throughout America and the creation of the Folger Shakespeare collection, with its seventy-nine copies of Shakespeare’s First Folio edition, in Washington, DC.

*Shakespeare and the American Nation* also contains an epilogue detailing the various cultural manifestations of Shakespeare, ranging from the numerous festivals held across America to the inclusion of performances and references to Shakespeare in both *The Simpsons* and *Star Trek*.

The book also contains two appendices, the first being a facsimile version of the title page and preface from the first complete edition of Shakespeare’s works published in 1795, the second being a map of the positioning of the Folger Shakespeare Library in relation to the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

And all this is fine. However, a reservation remains to haunt this reviewer. In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* Tom Stoppard offered an interpretation of *Hamlet* focused on two of the peripheral characters in Shakespeare’s tragedy. With Stoppard’s altering of attention the character of Hamlet – arguably the most recognizable of Shakespeare’s protagonists – becomes a background trace. This diminishing of Hamlet does not act to undo Stoppard’s creation, however; *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* is a worthy production forged from the shadows thrown by Shakespeare’s genius. So it is with Sturgess’s examination. However,
despite the titular concern with Shakespeare, the Bard is curiously silent throughout this text.

University of Edinburgh

Keith Mears


This book is concerned with the paradoxical implications of American writing about and performance of "vanishing Indians," with the appropriation of Indian legend as mythic past by the ascendency culture, and with the positive incorporation of the idea of Indians into the national narrative, following the expulsions, killings and surrenders of the later nineteenth century. This might seem familiar ground, except that Trachtenberg is markedly – often painfully – alert to misprision and contradiction in the notable range of examples he investigates. And he takes the discussion further, suggesting that the process of remaking "alien natives" as model Americans after 1880 does not merely coincide with the huge influx of southern and eastern European immigrants, but becomes a model in their acculturation. Just as the multiple and various indigenous tribes were all labelled "Indian," so the incomers of diverse culture, language and religion were homogenized as "alien immigrants," and also as "beaten men from beaten races" (Atlantic Monthly), who had somehow to be assimilated.

Using Longfellow's poem as source and paradigm, Trachtenberg shows just how seductive were its "faux indigenous hero" and invitation into the imagined primitive world, particularly in the peak immigration years. Responding sharply to details of visual and verbal language, he identifies numerous crossings between high and popular culture, literature and showmanship, entertainment and educative projects. The staged role-playing in Curtis's huge photographic record of the vanishing tribes is read against its vulgarizing echo in the Wanamaker Department Store Indian Show. Bizarre layerings are registered as the poem is transformed into film and pageant, even performed by indigenous people, including those from the "Indian Camp" of Hemingway's childhood, although with bronzed-up whites to perform the more complicated songs and dances. Recognition of the blood beneath the pavements and the ascendency's self-deceiving acquiescence in genocide is never far from the surface of Trachtenberg's narrative, occasionally flashing out in biting epithets.

Investigations of the idea of America, of pluralism and nationhood, by writers as diverse as Whitman and Crane, Du Bois and Austin, are drawn into this meditation on language, displacement and assimilation – including a notably complex reading of Henry James's responses to Ellis Island in The American Scene. In his final chapter Trachtenberg makes an eloquent claim to consideration, alongside these, of the autobiographical writings of Luther Standing Bear, Lakota Sioux and sometime Wild West Show performer.

The account of the "vanishing red" is more fully realized than that of the "arriving alien," and indeed the individual chapters do read as the separate essays
several originally were, but their juxtaposition offers fertile ground for further thinking about the complicated amalgam that is America. Sound scholarship and telling illustrations are there, of course, but the book is also a powerful personal statement about national identity, self-deception and self-knowledge from one of America’s leading cultural commentators. It is a treat and a challenge for scholar and general reader alike.

Selwyn College, Cambridge  

JEAN CHOTHIA


There are not many first-hand African American descriptions of the slave ships off the coast of Africa and the process of enslavement. Mohammed Baquaqua from the nineteenth century and Olaudah Equiano from the eighteenth are the most famous. The latter has recently been somewhat undermined by Vincent Carretta’s questioning of Equiano’s birthplace. Hence Kari J. Winter’s new edition of Jeffrey Brace’s as-told-to autobiography (originally published in 1810), with its vivid description of capture in around 1758 at the age of about sixteen and of the horror of the middle passage, is immediately useful for scholars of the black Atlantic. Brace, like Equiano, got as far as Europe (Dublin in his case), but his ownership meant that he quickly returned to the Americas. In this and many other ways, it is not a typical American slave narrative at all, as Brace spends most of his time once on land not in the southern States but in New England. The experiences are more akin to those of a figure like Harriet Wilson in her autobiographical novel Our Nig (1853) than to the traditional “ascent” narratives of a Frederick Douglass.

Most poignantly there are vivid descriptions of Brace’s time as a soldier in the revolutionary army fighting the British, a service of five years’ duration for which he had a long drawn-out battle to receive a pension in his latter years. Bryant’s picaresque tales of life in the Second Connecticut include pig-stealing from local Tory farmers and individual acts of heroism in the field. His eventual blindness is hardly touched upon in the narrative, despite its prominence in the title, which is one of the few disappointments in his compelling narrative. Kari J. Winter’s one lacuna in an otherwise brilliant scholarly edition is to eschew commentary on Rediker and Linebaugh’s radical context for such early working-class lives. The “violent revolutionary imagery,” together with his religiously radical language, which he describes, is not linked transatlantically to such figures as Robert Wedderburn and to the motley crew that make up the “many-headed Hydra” that worried the authorities so much. Brace is thus left slightly decontextualised. Despite this caveat, I thoroughly recommend this edition which provides excellent contexts for reading the narrative and includes copies of documents surrounding Brace’s manumission and struggle for a war pension, making this an essential addition to any black Atlantic scholar’s library.

University of Central Lancashire  

ALAN RICE