


2002

## Book Reviews

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### Recommended Citation

Society, Florida Historical (2002) "Book Reviews," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 81: No. 2, Article 6.  
Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol81/iss2/6>

## Book Reviews

*Subject Matter: Technology, The Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500-1676.* By Joyce E. Chaplin. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001. xiii, 411 pp. List of tables and figures, acknowledgments, prologue, coda, notes, index. \$45.00 cloth.)

Joyce Chaplin has written a book that goes well beyond its title. Her “Subject” is a set of complex integrated topics that have become common in the literature. Yet, almost without exception her definitions and thus perspectives on the relations among them refresh the discourse that now prevails. She begins with relevant geographies, hence places, and throughout speaks to racialization of the several bodies—Indian and English, women and men—that vied for the designation “normal.” Her “technologies” include such areas of human interest as medicine (theories, disease, and treatments), weaponry, and agriculture. She blends these topics into glosses on sex and procreation, force and selflessness, gods and faiths—all integrated with sets of geo-psychologies that she gleans from unusual juxtapositions and novel readings of texts, some well-known but many long-ignored by scholars.

Chaplin organizes the story into three chronologies, *Approaching America, 1500-1585*, *Invading America, 1585-1660*, and *Conquering America, 1640-1676*. Central to her analysis is the emergence of Anglo-American “superiority” in the several topical themes—technologies, bodies, and sciences (material hegemony). English colonization began at a point when English knowledge seemed inferior to both continental and Amerindian knowledge. Watching English population increase and native population decrease, the English finally arrived at fair certainties: their knowledge was no longer inferior to Catholic knowledge (as their

Protestant God and his providence made clear); and, in pointed reference, their bodies became superior to Indian bodies, even though bodies ought to fit the geophysical world in which they were found.

A few examples show the general direction of Chaplin's analysis. Indian weaponry, which at first seemed at least equal if not superior to English firearms, became a weak technology compared to their own. Similarly, Indian bodies proved weak, hence out of place in America. Too clever by half, Indians read the English definition of the female as a non-combatant and turned gender to their advantage, using women as warriors. Such unnatural perfidy proved their devilish nature. Their child-rearing was unnatural, turning naturally weak men into artificially fierce warriors. Were they beautiful "well-proportioned" people? Completely artificial, a result of binding to the board. Then, as the English emphasized improvement in knowledge and the prudent use of resources, the chance for the melding ("hybridity") of the two peoples failed, because Indian methods and Indian perspectives valued waste. Most telling of all, Indians proved unable to distinguish between matter and spirit. They thus proved themselves irredeemably superstitious, intellectually incapable of understanding the growing corpus of European scientific knowledge. Weak in body, weak in mind, they were doomed to the margins and confined to dark ignorance.

Using this interpretative focus, Chaplin explains the growing separation between the English and the Amerindians. English definitions drifted toward the inferiority of Indians, despite continued furious warfare, fearsome contacts, and shrewd interaction by the Indians and some English colonials. In compliance with a growing sense that the Amerindians were a people out of place and time, the English simply redefined them as objects rather than human beings. Chaplin's trenchant comment on the Indian bow as a weapon could be applied to the full range of topics: "the English reduced the Indian bow to a cold, dead ethnographic artifact." By 1670 or so, the English had redefined their Indian neighbors as cold, dead ethnographic items on the landscape.

Although Chaplin's book will be informative to any reader who knows the field, it nonetheless presents a few problems. At times, the text needs a stern editor. It is discursive and moves through the interrelated qualities of numerous topics. Some side-lights might have been trimmed and focused. Also, some guidance

would have been useful, especially in section II where numerous divisions of her text by spaces might have been better used for topical titles. Elsewhere such titles certainly would have added to the clarity of thought and the movement of Chaplin's arguments.

Chaplin's book simultaneously provides original insights and a synthesis of previous work. Her conclusions will not surprise readers, but her integration of them from apparently disparate cultural and intellectual resources tells a story that has not been told until now. Readers of this journal will find especially interesting her use of widespread examples, Spanish and French as well as English. Although some readers will no doubt object to her definitions and use of materials, they will find here a Geertzian "thick" and internally consistent description of multiple "discoveries," another angle of vision on the "rights" of occupation and the emergent superiority of the English "race." In addition, Chaplin situates her argument within the general trend toward an Atlantic focus, and the result is a successful book that jostles previous perspectives on early colonization.

Eldon Turner

*University of Florida*

***Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas.*** By Judith A. Carney. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001. xiv, 240 pp. Preface, introduction, notes, references, index. \$37.50 cloth.)

Scholars interested in the origin and impact of rice cultivation in New World slave societies should read Judith A. Carney's *Black Rice*. This study explores the history of rice cultivation and its diffusion across the Atlantic with an emphasis on "African agency." Carney successfully outlines how West African slave descendants of the Baga, Bainouk, Manjuk, Nalu, Balant, and Diola transplanted rice to the Americas, particularly to the South Carolina and Georgia lowcountry. Trained as a geographer, Carney relates the "untold story of the African presence and legacy in the Americas" through a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspective. She relies on a variety of sources including travel literature, scientific classifications, archeological reports, geographical surveys, and an abundance of secondary studies. According to Carney, slaves not only transplanted their knowledge of rice cultivation to the



Atlantic World, but they also brought a unique culture which developed as a result of cultivating the crop.

Viewing rice culture as a "system of knowledge," the author suggests that West African slaves from the Upper Guinea Coast and the Cape Verde Islands "tutored" planters in the most efficient methods of cultivating this labor-intensive crop. Thus, the book begins by reconstructing the historical record and establishing that rice cultivation existed in various parts of Africa prior to European contact. When the Portuguese explored the African continent in the fifteenth century, Carney explains that the indigenous people were already cultivating and consuming rice as a dietary staple. The crop remained important even after initial encounters between Europeans and Africans because African slaves brought rice with them on their forced migration across the Atlantic. Carney's evidence indicates that women played a primary role in the transformation of rice cultivation to the Americas, covertly hiding rice grains in their hair while others openly milled rice aboard slave ships. Apparently, some sea captains utilized African women's labor skills on slave vessels. Upon arrival in the Americas, women continued to serve as the primary rice workers because of their "sophisticated knowledge" of soil fertility and mastery of milling rice without crushing or breaking the grain. Male slaves who milled rice offered "higher levels of broken rice" which led planters to rely on the work of female slaves who were skilled at the craft.

In addition, Carney skillfully discusses the African female role in rice cultivation, making the gender component her greatest contribution to the literature. Carney moves beyond simply stating that women were central to the workforce by elaborating on the specific reasons why their work was so important to rice cultivation. She offers a thorough analysis of skill, expanding the way one views special talents among slave laborers. Aside from these strengths, however, limited primary source evidence detracts from her overall argument. For example, Carney does not present enough data to support the notion that African slaves "tutored" their owners in rice cultivation. Although this argument clearly indicates "African agency," it may be difficult for readers to imagine slaves serving as "tutors" to the instrument of their oppression, even if the relationship between master and slave involved negotiation. Readers might wonder what plantation records and slave narratives reveal about rice cultivation; Carney explains that many of these sources present historical biases or paternalistic views. Extant primary data

may not be available to fully develop the ideas presented in *Black Rice*, which is not the fault of the author.

*Black Rice* fits into a historiographical discussion about African contributions to rice cultivation in colonial America initiated by Peter Wood in 1974 with the publication of *Black Majority*. Although Wood's work overlooked the role of women, Carney clearly outlines the significance of gender to the development and maintenance of rice culture in the Atlantic World. Her book is also complementary to the more recent works of Ira Berlin and Phillip Morgan, particularly as it relates to discussions of the task system. Carney argues that tasking enabled African slaves and their descendants to continue traditional methods of cultivation through their labor on provision grounds. *Black Rice* is well written and answers difficult questions about historiographical topics with which scholars have grappled for more than three decades. It is an excellent source for those interested in cross-disciplined approaches to understanding the development of the Atlantic World.

Daina L. Ramey

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***Navigating Failure: Bankruptcy and Commercial Society in Antebellum America.*** By Edward J. Balleisen. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. xv, 322 pp. Acknowledgments, note on research method, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$18.95 paper.)

In antebellum America, bankruptcy possessed an ambiguous image. As Alexis de Tocqueville assessed Jacksonian Democracy, he expressed amazement at the tolerance rendered bankrupts by government officials and the general public. In this regard, compared to all other commercial people throughout the world, Americans were unique. Yet during the decades before the Civil War, public authorities, business people, religious leaders, fiction writers, and journalist commentators debated the moral and economic efficacy of bankruptcy as a remedy for commercial failure. Edward J. Balleisen's important study explains the socio-institutional and cultural dimensions of bankruptcy in the antebellum United States, and how it shaped the evolution of American Capitalism.

Balleisen focuses on the operation of the federal Bankruptcy Act of 1841. Although the Constitution of 1787 authorized nation-

al bankruptcy legislation, Congress exercised the power only twice before the Civil War, enacting measures in 1800 and in 1841. Neither law remained in force for more than eighteen months. A short-lived Whig congressional majority passed the latter law amidst the economic dislocation of 1839-1843, the worst depression of the American nation's first century. Over 33,000 individuals took advantage of the Act, roughly one in eight of all free adult Americans. Drawing primarily from the bankruptcy records of the federal court jurisdiction of Southern New York, Balleisen has compiled data on over five hundred petitioners under the law. The depth of this evidence is extraordinary; what Balleisen has done with it is equally impressive.

In considerable detail Balleisen develops social and economic profiles of hundreds of bankrupts. He locates these men's and (nine) women's fluctuating fortunes within the cultural discourse of ministers, fiction writers, public officials, and reformers—as well as the institutional processes of law administration—over much of the antebellum period. Balleisen shapes his material to the inner contours of the capitalist market revolution which transformed America between 1815 and the Civil War. He thus follows these people from their initial encounter with the risks and opportunities local markets and communities presented after the 1819 recession and during the 1820s and thirties, until they were overtaken by the panics of 1837 and 1839 and the ensuing depression. The concluding third of the book then considers the success rates, between the mid-1840s and 1870s, of many who resorted to the fresh start the 1841 law offered.

The image of capitalist market economy emerging from Balleisen's richly-textured narrative is balanced. By the 1830s, the limited commercial and pre-industrial, agricultural economy centered on modest-sized local communities and household production, which had characterized the nation's initial decades, was clearly giving way to a more market-oriented entrepreneurial order in which small-scale farm, artisan, and mercantile producers were prevalent. Wealthy capitalist financiers (supported by their lawyers) and big slave-holding planters clearly possessed market power and influence, but they were not dominant. Similarly, transportation, banking, and manufacturing corporations operated within political constraints imposed by special legislative grants. All put, the most marginal and isolated farmers, herdsmen, or artisans, moreover, were subject to risks and opportunities circumscribed by



a pervasive dependence upon credit. Many scholars have analyzed how fundamental was the credit system to the middle-class social order and economic opportunity which constituted the antebellum American way of life. The system fostered relatively easy entry into and exit from innumerable small and medium-size undertakings within growing regional and national markets.

Better than anyone before, however, Balleisen demonstrates the significance of familial and other close personal networks to the post-failure recovery and long-term persistence of the independent proprietors who owned these enterprises. Even so, of those bankrupts whose fortunes Balleisen traces into later decades—especially those having been “saved” by associational relationships—roughly 45 percent achieved “successful” market independence during the rest of their active business lives. Throughout the same period, another 15 percent maintained a precarious autonomy. About 40 percent lost altogether their proprietary independence, joining the growing ranks of the free-labor, wage-earning class, or the white-collar, salaried, middle class.

Accompanying the erosion of proprietary independence as a market reality for many Americans, was a redefined cultural discourse. Increasingly, by the Civil War, according to Balleisen, altering the cultural meaning of “republican independence . . . rested not on the responsibilities of self-employment, but on freedom from both the most severe forms of subservience and the degrading precariousness of irretrievable indebtedness.” Balleisen concludes with the suggestion that the postbellum outcome of this social-class, market, and cultural transformation shaped Americans’ even more wrenching confrontation with the late-nineteenth industrial economy and the rise of big business.

Tony A. Freyer

*University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa*

***An Honorable Defeat: The Last Days of the Confederate Government.*** By William C. Davis. (New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2001. xiv, 496 pp. Acknowledgments, introduction, notes, bibliography, index. \$30.00 hardcover.)

William C. Davis presents here a detailed, intriguing, and mostly convincing account of what he characterizes as “really the last battle of the Civil War.” He describes a bloodless, yet mighty

struggle fought out over the last four months of the war between Confederate President Jefferson Davis, and the man who served in his cabinet as Secretary of War, Kentuckian John C. Breckinridge. The issue dividing the two Southerners was the manner and character of the Confederacy's inevitable demise.

President Davis refused to acknowledge that inevitability, and believed as well that a Spartan-like effort, until either victory or death was achieved, was the only honorable course for the South. Breckinridge, equally as concerned as was Davis with honorable conduct and outcome, believed that a surrender with dignity was not only politically preferable to Davis's vision, it was the only way to avoid a degeneration of the southern cause into "farce," which would rob the South of its last vestige of honor.

Davis is eminently qualified to paint this picture of the Confederate government's last days. A prolific Civil War scholar, he has written dozens of books and articles on the subject, including biographies of Davis and Breckinridge. His portraits of the two antagonists rest upon a thorough knowledge of all the available sources, as his endnotes and bibliography attest. Breckinridge dominates the narrative. Mexican War veteran, U.S. vice-president at thirty-five, presidential candidate at thirty-nine, Kentucky senator, and finally a refugee fleeing to the Confederacy to avoid certain arrest by union authorities, Major-General Breckinridge accepted Jefferson Davis's call to head the War Department early in 1865. He was "a powerful man of the sort never before seen in the Cabinet." Breckinridge immediately brought heretofore unknown efficiency to the War Department, but he also began gathering information from the commanders in the field that quickly convinced him the war effort was hopeless. He determined as well that President Davis would reject any negotiations based upon reunion and emancipation, and seemed fixed upon continuing to fight, even to the point of guerilla bands struggling on in the southern hills. As Breckinridge said while addressing a group of Confederate senators, such a policy would result only in the Confederacy being "captured in fragments," with its soldiers "disband[ing] like banditti." The Secretary of War wanted a surrender that would "maintain the dignity of our cause, and secure the respect of our enemies, and the best terms for our soldiers." He concluded, "This has been a magnificent epic, in God's name let it not terminate in a farce." From Richmond, Breckinridge worked



through February and March to achieve a “steady accumulation of persuasions” from government officials and commanders in the field to alter the President’s mind. Yet Davis, proud, vain, and incapable of accepting opinions contrary to his own could not be swayed. “If ever a man thrived on wishful thinking it was President Jefferson Davis,” asserts the author. Davis continued to believe victory could be achieved even after being forced to abandon Richmond, and upon learning of Lee’s surrender. From Danville, Virginia, Davis issued a call to his countrymen to continue the struggle, which was in the author’s judgment a “prescription for the sort of farcical end to their epic Breckinridge warned against weeks before.” Vivid examples of that “farcical end” appear in this narrative as civilian looting and military breakdown increased during the last days of the Confederacy.

As Davis and Breckenridge traveled south, they each pursued their separate agendas. Davis contemplated escape to the Trans-Mississippi where he imagined he could join the forces under General Kirby Smith and continue the war. Breckinridge, meanwhile, met with General William Sherman attempting to negotiate a “Confederate Reconstruction” that southern state governments would carry out.

This narrative moves at times at a pace overly slow, the flight often described literally meal by meal. After Davis’s capture in Irwinville, Georgia, in May 1865, the subsequent account of Breckinridge’s, and also Benjamin’s, escapes through Florida brims with adventures of encounters with thieves, pirates, union patrols, as well as the heat and mosquitoes of the region. William C. Davis creates a vivid image of the environs of mid-nineteenth-century Florida as the refugees wended their separate ways from the Georgia border through central Florida, to the coast, and eventually to Cuba and finally England, where Benjamin remained. Breckinridge returned first to Canada, and then home to Kentucky after Andrew Johnson’s Christmas 1868 amnesty.

Davis has crafted a fascinating story of flight, capture, and escape, built around his theme of two honorable, strong-willed Confederate leaders in conflict. His thesis is convincing, and his story of this “last battle” of the Civil War will find an audience among specialists, general readers, and students of Florida history.

Hutch Johnson

*Gordon College*

**Intimate Strategies of the Civil War: Military Commanders and Their Wives.** Edited by Carol K. Bleser and Lesley J. Gordon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. xxiii, 292 pp. Acknowledgments, editors' introduction, notes, authors' biographies. \$30.00 cloth.)

In preparing this volume, editors Carol Bleser and Lesley Gordon aimed to illuminate "broader issues of war and marriage including the impact of the Civil War on traditional gender roles, private and public identity, and the balance of power within the relationship." As well, they sought to show how "marital relationships . . . shaped politics, military decisions." To accomplish their aims, the editors invited scholars familiar with particular Civil War leaders, or their wives, to write dual biographies, giving equal weight to each spouse.

The articles in *Intimate Strategies* are extremely rich in presenting the variety and complexities of mid-nineteenth-century marriages. The authors present a range of couples, none of which fully exemplified the Victorian ideal of active men and submissive wives. These detailed examinations are the strength of this book.

A few of the wives in this study, despite their husbands' military positions, provided the economic stability and business sense in the relationship. Peter Carmichael shows that Lizinka Ewell was not only the stronger partner but the better business manager. Her attempts to select members of her husband's staff during the war, however, led to a widespread perception that she wore the pants, and probably hurt Richard Ewell's career. Sarah Wiggins similarly shows in the Gorgas marriage a wife who learned independence during the war, which led to a renewed relationship afterward in which the couple came to participate jointly in business endeavors.

More women remained behind the scenes, but used their social connections and personal skills to aid their husbands' military careers. This was especially true for women from prominent political families, such as Ellen Sherman, from the Ewing family; Jessie Benton Frémont, who had largely been raised in Washington among the political elite; and Elizabeth Blair Lee, whose husband Phillips found himself living in town with his powerful father-in-law Preston Blair. John Marszalek clearly shows how the Ewings got W.T. Sherman a commission in 1861, and then an invalid post

after he failed at his first command, although the author overstates the supposed sibling relationship between the pair (he was a ward in the Ewing household rather than an adopted son). Pamela Herr and Virginia Laas, respectively, place the Frémonts and the Phillips Lees within their familial and political contexts, and indicate that without two intelligent and ambitious wives, the husbands would not have had the careers they did.

A related talent of several of the wives lay in their manipulating the wartime and post-war record, turning their husbands into heroes. Sarah Gardner reveals Mary Anna Jackson working to make Stonewall Jackson a hero even while he lived, and then becoming the "Widow of the Confederacy" as an occupation. LaSalle Pickett, argues Lesley Gordon, presented her husband George as a tragic hero betrayed at Gettysburg. And Elizabeth Custer, whom Shirley Leckie shows to have been adept at social and political manipulation, built on her husband's outsized self-presentation to create a heroic myth that lasted nearly a century.

Such interesting couples could make the reader wonder if "domestic ideology" ever existed in Victorian America. But the essays testify that women had to work with feminine wiles or be perceived as harridans, as was Lizinka Ewell. In addition, many of the couples fully accepted separate spheres. Ellen Sherman saw her role as nurturing both children and husband. Stonewall Jackson wrote to his wife that when he thought of her, he thought of home. The marriages of the Robert E. Lees and the Davises kept to separate spheres, as Emory Thomas and Carol Bleser indicate, although Bleser suggests that within the domestic sphere, Varina Davis played an important role, especially during her husband's many illnesses. John Simon presents the Grants as a loving couple with separate duties, but helping each other with mutual respect, creating a relationship that in some ways intertwined the public and private. And Jennifer Smith attests in her study of Fannie and Lawrence Chamberlain that a wife could even protest her husband's absence at war; Fannie wrote her husband in 1862 that "you ought to be at your own home."

*Intimate Strategies* is, however, less successful at showing the personal affecting the political or military. Ulysses Grant and W.T. Sherman were better generals because of their wives' support; and a number of the husbands might not have held quite so high a rank without their wives' intervention. But military historians have studied individual commanders since the Civil War ended and



have recognized that patronage too frequently placed or removed them from leadership. Nor is it true that these elite couples' "emotions were typical of all Civil War couples." Few military wives had the social position to maneuver their husbands into higher rank; few husbands had the rank to make significant military decisions with or without spousal help, or even to enable wives to join them at camp.

The volume is, then, excellent as a study of elite couples in Victorian America and particularly during the Civil War. As such, it adds to a sparse literature and should be welcomed by a variety of scholars. A great deal more work remains to be done, however, before military history is written successfully with a gender dimension.

Carole Elizabeth Adams

*University of Central Florida*

***The Union That Shaped the Confederacy: Robert Toombs and Alexander H. Stephens.*** By William C. Davis (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001. xi, 284 pp. Preface, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.)

In his latest book, William C. Davis does a masterful job of recounting the lifelong friendship between Robert Toombs and Alexander H. Stephens. It was a friendship of the ages, one where the two forged a truly symbiotic bond which proved unbreakable even in death.

Toombs, well-to-do, tall and ruggedly built, possessed great charisma and a keen intellect, but suffered from a lack of self-discipline and a volcanic temper made much worse by an addiction to hyperbole. Stephens, two years younger than Toombs and born into poverty, struggled with ill health all of his days. Only five and a half feet tall and never weighing more than a hundred pounds, Stephens labeled himself a "half finished thing." Despite his physical infirmities, "Little Aleck," as Toombs called him, possessed a first-rate mind. If plagued by bouts of melancholia and a Napoleonic complex (he referred to his political opponents as "big bugs"), it seldom prevented Stephens from cogently, and most times successfully, arguing his point. While Toombs supplied the energy, Stephens provided the focus.

Notwithstanding their differences, several factors brought Toombs and Stephens together and thus allowed them to not only

become fast friends, but staunch political allies as well. Both were lawyers from Georgia, and both aligned themselves with the Whig Party. Elected to Congress, Toombs and Stephens bent all of their endeavors towards the defense of Southern rights, yet they also remained committed to the preservation of the Union and the spirit of accommodation that held the country intact. Both wholeheartedly supported the Compromise of 1850, strove to pass the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, and even endorsed the notorious Lecompton Constitution of 1857. By this time, the pair had joined the Democratic Party since Southern Whigs enjoyed few options after 1852, although Toombs and Stephens tried to form a new political party from the wreckage of Whiggery. Toombs became a Democrat because of the party's agenda to defend slavery and to see to its spread, while Stephens went over to his old foes after his public condemnation of the repellant American Party. The two soon began to assert a great deal of authority within the ranks of the Democracy. Georgia carried great political weight in the South, and Toombs and Stephens often spoke for their state. As secession loomed in 1860, the friends experienced one of the few breaks in their relationship. After the walkout from the Democratic national convention in Charleston, Toombs urged the South to leave the Union while Stephens hoped for another sectional reconciliation.

The rift was soon mended, for with secession fast becoming a reality in Montgomery in early 1861, both Toombs and Stephens pushed for immediate action on the part of the South to fashion a new government. However, the pair's early enthusiasm for the fledgling Confederate States of America soon waned. Toombs quickly wearied of serving as the first Secretary of State and then chafed as a general in the Army of Northern Virginia, so that by the late autumn of 1862, he had returned to the life of a private citizen. While Stephens was the primary author of the Confederate Constitution, he did little with the powers of the vice-presidency, the position his colleagues bestowed upon him. It was not his choice to suffer his office as superfluous, that was Jefferson Davis's mistake to make, but even as the president ignored Stephens, the vice-president willingly removed himself from the parliamentary contests in the Confederate Congress. As the war progressed, Stephens absented himself more and more from Richmond.

The question that arises from this is just how much Toombs and Stephens directed the course of the Confederacy during the



war? That they both harbored the deepest antipathy towards Davis is abundantly clear, even to the point of undermining the course of the Southern war effort with their criticisms public and private. However, once the fighting started, military matters overtook political machinations. Perhaps Toombs's brilliant and steadfast defense of Rohrbach Bridge at the Battle of Antietam did more than any of the pair's accomplishments to preserve the Confederacy. The Georgians' stand saved the Army of Northern Virginia, which served as a much greater bulwark for Southern independence than any blustery pronouncement delivered by Toombs or any political science theory posited by Stephens.

Davis's work makes for a fine addition to the scholarship on antebellum politics and the American Civil War. His research is impeccable and his writing style is emotionally powerful. Davis is a superior biographer, as he brings Robert Toombs and Alexander H. Stephens to life for the reader. If the book's title and a portion of its thesis fall short of the mark, it in no way diminishes the overall merit of *The Union That Shaped the Confederacy*.

Cyril M. Lagvanec

East Carolina University

***The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1880s.***

By Bertram Wyatt-Brown. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. xix, 412 pp. Preface, appendix, notes, acknowledgments, index. \$55.00 cloth.)

This book of essays, some of them published earlier, traces the spirit, convictions, and public affectations of southern men from the optimistic time of growth before and after the American Revolution through the long melancholy period of remorse and reaction after the humiliation in 1865. Professor Wyatt-Brown discusses ideas of honor and causes of shame among male slaves in his first chapter, and writes throughout about the expectations of southern white women as a clue to masculine pride and resolve; but he centers, with "no apology," on white men, the arbiters of southern civic life. His main concern is the civic honor of community leaders, meaning both their personal and familial pride and their public reputations—that is, community standing based on the ability to control and protect inferior dependents (women and slaves, or after the Civil War, black workers) and to pass on

influence and status to their clients and sons. The first part of the book looks at the code of honor and its relationship to politics, the second at the tensions in white society caused by the rise of evangelical religion, and the third at the effects of Civil War and Reconstruction on the southern male psyche. Throughout, the author stresses the roles of political and religious rhetoric and of shared ritual in shaping southern culture.

The second essay, "Revolutionary Rhetoric," relates ways in which their common "love of honor and fear of shame" united northern and southern colonists "in common antipathy toward British overlords" in the 1770s and 1780s. But this unity died in the years after the Revolution as the northern states adopted "evangelical and commercial" principles and southerners "continued to admire the Revolutionary rhetoric with its primal overtones that glorified ascriptions of power and race." "Andrew Jackson's Honor," a fresh look at ways of "ritualizing violence" in the organized, circumscribed language of southern honor, crowns this first part of the book. Duels, Wyatt-Brown tells us, "were supposed to prevent chaos." The famous Jackson-Dickinson duel illustrates the place of honor as a factor in Jackson's personal and political personas; displays of honor increased the self-esteem of the often depressed and insecure leader, and brought affirmation from his rural constituency as well. The hero of New Orleans courted the people, "not because of a modern and liberal concept of democracy in which all conditions of people were equal but because he reckoned the popular will to be an instrument on self-vindication."

Part two of the book deals with "grace"—southern religion—and its uneasy co-existence with honor. As evangelical Protestantism advanced South in the 1830s and 1840s, southerners faced such preachments as the presumed equality of all persons before God and New Testament injunctions to live in peace and "turn the other cheek," admonitions certain to bother slave holders used to repressing slave individuality and answering affronts with threats of ritual violence. About 50 percent of southerners (black and white) became members of evangelical denominations in the 1830s, a change which "gradually softened" the "hard code of family-based honor . . . as piety became a prerequisite for the determination of respectability." The interesting chapter on the egalitarian "anti-mission" or Primitive Baptists, who hated pretensions of aristocracy and fought against the social conformity and

theological optimism of the Missionary Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, shows how complicated—yet complete—was the capture of the South by these groups. Still, the South also captured evangelicalism. “Modernizing Slave-Ownning,” Chapter Six, describes the development of pro-slavery arguments among southern clergy, evidence of the “intermixture of evangelicalism and the institution of slavery” designed to undergird public support for the institution and assuage any individual guilt that might be aroused by traffic in black souls. The clergy imagined various ways to modernize and justify slavery, but in the end the ideas all boiled down to admonitions about Christian patriarchy and southern honor.

The last part of the book, called simply “War and Aftermath,” could stand on its own. Its well-constructed analysis of southerners’ “collective sense of sullen anger” in the period after Reconstruction will be especially useful to researchers and teachers. Both as a synthesis of other historians’ ideas and as unique analysis, the last chapter, “Honor Redeemed in Blood,” is especially outstanding. Humiliation, joined with nostalgia for an imagined past, spawned a corporate claim to victimization, not defeat, in the late nineteenth-century South, and engendered not only worship of the Confederate dead but race hatred—in other words, blaming black southerners, the presumed cause of the late war and degradation. “It can be argued,” Wyatt-Brown writes, “that as the duel dropped out of favor it was replaced with hangings, burnings, and mutilations.” Rituals of “honor” dominated the lynch mob and the ideology of the “Lost Cause.”

Fittingly, this study begins and ends with an epigraph from Julian Pitt-Rivers: “Honor has caused more deaths than the plague.” Southern honor, even old-fashioned “Sir Walter Scott” chivalry and seemingly benign “southern hospitality,” always had a dark underside. It existed in concert with elitism and white supremacy and in perilous contradiction to northern commercialism, democratic ideals, and the egalitarian idea of “grace.” *The Shaping of Southern Culture* elegantly complements Wyatt-Brown’s other works, especially his important 1982 book about honor and shame in the world of the antebellum planter elite, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*. Like *Southern Honor*, this book will become a classic of southern historical literature.

Sarah H. Brown

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*Preacher Woman Sings the Blues: The Autobiographies of Nineteenth-Century African American Evangelists.* By Richard J. Douglass-Chin. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001. ix, 228 pp. Acknowledgments, introduction, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.)

In *Preacher Woman Sings the Blues: The Autobiographies of Nineteenth-Century African-American Evangelists*, Richard J. Douglass-Chin sets out to demonstrate the significance and the uniqueness of black women telling their life stories. Essentially Douglass-Chin argues that through their autobiographies, black females, unlike their male counterparts, articulated in an authentic voice the African-American experience.

What is authentic about the African-American female voice? Douglass-Chin asserts that it involves style and content, as well as the relationship between the storyteller and those that witnessed the testimony given. He uses "autophylography" to describe the life story that connotes the communal aspect of the African experience as opposed to the individualism of Europe. Douglass-Chin explains that autophylography "emphasizes both the life shared by the group in the present moment and the shared life lived countless times before."

In addition, attention is paid to other unique African traits of the black female voice: spirituality and musicality, that is, the unique cadences and format of presentation. The African tradition is holistic. There is no sharp demarcation between the sacred and the secular, as occurs in the European experience; nor between the performer and those who observe the performance. Also, the African oral tradition is rooted in movement, performance, rather than staid and immovable discourse. Consequently, the preacher is the embodiment of the African oral expression.

Douglass-Chin goes on to argue that whether she is an actual preacher or not, the African-American woman becomes one when she testifies to the circumstances of her life; her story becomes a sermon that is sung. And the song is the blues, the musical rendering of the hardships and the triumph of the African-American people. It is addressed to all that want to hear this mournful and glorious song, unfiltered through the Western cultural experience that demands conformity, denial, and the suppression of the female.

To support his thesis, Douglass-Chin explores testimonies of African-American women from the eighteenth-century petition by a slave woman to contemporary novelists. He makes skillful and fruitful use of contemporary literary studies to document and support his unique reading of his sources.

His analysis of the eighteenth-century slave petition by "Belinda" reveals the first autobiographical utterance in writing of the African female experience in America. To illustrate the changing African-American voice of the Victorian era, Douglass-Chin examines the autobiographical expressions of diverse figures including Arena Lee, Rebecca Cox Jackson, Zilpha Elaw, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Jacobs, Julia Foote, Amanda Smith, and Virginia Broughton. He concludes that by the end of the nineteenth century, the authentic voice is submerged and diluted through the expectation of the "true womanhood" ideal of the Victorian era, illustrated in the autobiographies of Smith, Broughton, and an evangelist named Elizabeth. Douglass-Chin finds these "turn of the century daughters . . . frozen into self-consciousness, only rarely exhibit returns to the ancestral places of their mothers—the vernacular, the circular, the contiguous, the power of song."

It is not until the twentieth century, that the authentic African-American voice resurfaces in the works of African-American women novelists. Zora Neale Hurston begins the process. Janie's narrative in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* spoken in "the vernacular of her own blackness" is not just a personal story; it is an account of the experience of African Americans up to the early twentieth century. Alice Walker picks up the story as experienced by black women in *The Color Purple*. The central character Celie assisted by the blues woman, Shug Avery pontificates on liberation from the racism and sexism which has held the nation in bondage. The authentic African-American voice is finally proclaimed in Toni Morrison's "holy powerful preacher woman," Baby Suggs, and the convent women of *Paradise*. It emerged as well through Minnie Ransom in *The Salt Eaters* by Toni Cade Bambara. Douglas-Chin concludes that all these bad blues preacher women deliver performances of the self which are communal exercises that precipitate a new sense of community.

Douglass-Chin's thesis is convincing and compelling. *Preacher Woman Sings the Blues* is an important contribution to the reconstruction of the historical experience of African Americans



through the use of literary texts. It is a welcome addition to intellectual history and to the ongoing discourse on the African-American struggle to crease and articulate an authentic self.

Carolyn Williams

*University of North Florida*

***Long Gray Lines: The Southern Military School Tradition, 1839-1915.***

By Rod Andrew Jr. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. viii, 169 pp. Acknowledgments, introduction, conclusion, appendix, notes, bibliography, index, \$29.95 cloth.)

Through universities like Texas A&M and Auburn, military discipline merged with education in the South during most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Historians like John Hope Franklin and Don Higginbotham have studied the phenomenon with differing results focusing mainly on the relationship between the militarism of the schools and nature of the South. In *Long Gray Lines*, Rod Andrew Jr. dismisses the long held southern militancy thesis, initially put forth by Franklin, and argues in its place that regional concepts of republican virtue provided the impetus behind the military school tradition in the South.

Professor Andrew, through his careful placement of these military schools within the southern historical context, provides the reader with a clear and concise outline of the progress of the South from 1839 until the eve of World War I. Andrew's first chapter introduces the reader to his republicanism thesis. The South coupled republican virtue with the ever-present need for defense as antebellum southerners often found themselves standing on the fringes of national boundaries and national laws. By providing a military education, young men would be taught defense skills and, by virtue of their training, the good citizenship necessary to ensure the preservation and advancement of southern society. Additionally, these institutions taught useful sciences, like engineering and mathematics, which promised a broad impact on society at large.

Interestingly, the very thing that southern military schools concentrated their studies on nearly destroyed them. The Civil War years were lean due to the departure of students from the classrooms to the battle lines. These schools, however, did play a major role in the Confederate cause by providing basic military training

to “green” soldiers. In chronicling the war years and beyond, Andrew places military school cadets at the center of the perpetuation of Lost Cause mythology. These universities thrived so much on Confederate memory that numerous renowned southern officers such as Stephen D. Lee at Mississippi State and “Sul” Ross at Texas A&M were recruited to lead schools and sit prominently on university boards of trustees.

Significantly, in the midst of strict military discipline and order, students were surprisingly willing to let their feelings be known to administrators about policies they considered unfair. Virtually all the institutions Andrew examined had some history of student protest. He noted that on the campuses of Mississippi State and Clemson incidents occurred that resulted in nearly whole classes withdrawing from school when disciplinary action was taken against respected classmates. On occasions like these, the student protests usually worked. Insightfully, Andrew does not allow the reader to forget his republican thesis by noting the Victorian sensibilities exhibited by the students who were willing to risk their own careers in defense of an ideal.

Notably, Professor Andrew provides a chapter that examines the state of military education for black students. At schools like Florida A&M and Hampton, the experience followed very closely that of white military schools except for the notable absence of weaponry. Black students were trained in drill but were not allowed to carry rifles as were their white counterparts. This brings out one of the few flaws of Andrew’s book. For a work that so deeply addresses the problems of the South from 1839 to 1915, there is relatively little said about race outside of this single chapter. While frontier conditions did require military skills, Andrew pays scant attention to slave insurrection as the South’s most pressing fear. Although, the author avoids the topic, there is little doubt that southerners saw military training as a potential line of defense against internal rebellion.

In fewer than 120 pages of text, Professor Andrew makes a significant contribution to southern history. His work presents students with a new lens through which to view the concept of southern militarism. The book’s brevity and innovative interpretations combine to make it a suitable addition to any college level course with a focus on the nineteenth-century South. Aside from Andrew’s research, the book is written in a highly readable prose that should allow students to work their way through it without the intimidation

that often follows scholarly work. In sum, *Long Gray Lines* should find a broad audience within the profession and reward its author with the full respect of his fellow southern historians.

Brian D. McKnight

Mississippi State University

***Hallelujah Lads & Lasses - Remaking the Salvation Army in America, 1880-1930.*** By Lillian Taiz. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. 239 pp. Acknowledgments, abbreviations, introduction, conclusion, appendix, notes, index, illustrations, tables. \$39.95 cloth.)

The images that immediately pop into my head when someone mentions the Salvation Army come either from *Guys and Dolls*, from the ubiquitous reclamation bins, or from the bell-ringers at Christmas time. Although I know a bit of their history, I typically do not associate the uniformed persons with evangelical Christianity, particularly a variety that delved deeply into the American working class a century ago. Lillian Taiz, along with several other scholars, are reminding us that the Salvation Army's early years in America were quite different. Drawing upon the examples of a military-style evangelicalism developed in the slums of London, General William Booth's followers, and especially his dutiful children, endeavored to convert America's working class. In doing so, the Salvation Army joined a growing array of missions that sought to fill the void created by the abandonment of urban centers by the mainstream Protestant churches. The restructuring of cities along class lines in the last quarter of the nineteenth century provided a unique opportunity for nondenominational groups like the Salvation Army to convert and rescue the urban poor from a culture of poverty and despair.

Key to reaching the urban working class in America was the ability to adapt rowdy forms of working-class leisure to evangelical purposes. Dramatic street theater, boisterous parades, and the physically expressive religion of camp meetings were the stock in trade of the Salvation Army in its first two decades. Such a religious culture had an unmistakable appeal for a segment of the urban working class (particularly British and American-born whites) and helped the Salvation Army establish a firm foot-hold in industrial cities. This culture not only appealed to the working



class but shaped an organization dominated by working-class men and women. Although Booth tried to assert a firm control over all branches of the Salvation Army, American salvationists spent their early years in constant rebellion against his dictates. Indeed, the Salvation Army created an institutional culture at odds with the image of authoritarian military discipline projected by Booth. In America, the Army was a democratic organization, one which engulfed working-class men and women in a closed, Christian community and empowered them (largely irrespective of gender) to assert a good deal of authority.

By the turn of the century, two different trends reshaped the Salvation Army into an organization more familiar to our current images. First was the Army's shift away from an emphasis on the purely spiritual functions toward a more social mission. Experiencing many of the same intellectual influences that created the Social Gospel in mainstream Protestant churches, Booth began emphasizing the social causes of poverty. The Salvation Army expanded the notion of "rescue work" to include the provision of cheap fuel, second-hand clothing and furniture, inexpensive hotels, and unemployment bureaus. Combating sinful human nature gradually took a back seat to the new social mission, although not without spreading discontent among the "hallelujah lads and lasses." Running a broad-based social service program necessitated a more bureaucratic organizational structure, a development that significantly reduced local autonomy and democracy. The second trend affected the nature of the Army's religious practices. The more bureaucratic style of the organization created a more genteel, *bourgeois* religious culture, one that took spiritual work out of the rowdy street culture and replaced it with more refined and tame rituals. These rituals incorporated new technological developments and greater comfort, but sacrificed the connection to working-class culture. Since both of these developments conformed to initiatives from the parent organization, they suggest that the Americans perhaps had less autonomy than was suggested in earlier chapters.

Taiz does an excellent job of profiling the "red hot men and women" of the Salvation Army, and of restoring its importance as a genuine working-class evangelical agency. Historians who treat all working-class religion as evidence of either the *embourgeoisement* or the opiate of the masses neglect the other purposes that spiri-

tuality might serve. Likewise, Taiz reminds us of the powerful cultural trends of the 1890s that simultaneously inspired progressive reform and segmented in such ways as to limit working-class autonomy and agency. Here, Taiz's work might have benefited from some comparative analysis with other movements like the industrial programs of the YMCA and YWCA. Both of these organizations also moved away from their original spiritual purposes to develop broad social programs. But these are minor quibbles. Taiz has written an informative and readable history of the formative years of the Salvation Army in the United States, full of insights about the transformation of America at the turn of the last century.

Ken Fones-Wol

*West Virginia University*

***Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925-1945.*** By Beth Tompkins Bates. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. xiv, 275 pp. Acknowledgements, abbreviations, introduction, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth).

This book focuses on an African-American labor union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), as a significant force in the increasingly militant struggle for black equality during the period between the two World Wars. Formed in 1925, the BSCP sought to organize porters and maids who worked for the Chicago-based Pullman Sleeping Car Company, then the largest private employer of African Americans in the United States. The union sought more than just bread-and-butter gains. For its leaders and rank and file alike, the author explains, "issues of pay and hours of work were related to larger issues of dignity and manhood rights." This principle guided the union's efforts to gain members and, particularly in Chicago, acceptance from the larger black community. Such an approach eventually enabled the union to build significant cross-class alliances among black Chicagoans.

Led by A. Philip Randolph, editor of the radical black journal *The Messenger*, the BSCP initially faced opposition from most black Chicago leaders, including ministers and newspaper editors, due in large part to the Pullman Company's long record of bestowing



corporate welfare upon the city's black community. Clubwomen, most but not all of them black, played a crucial role in gaining community support for the BSCP, which they viewed as "not just a labor organization but a social movement." The involvement of clubwomen in spreading the BSCP's message reinforced the union's larger focus on civil rights. The BSCP soon began to portray itself as part of the "new crowd" of black leaders who were willing to stand up for equal rights for blacks, as opposed to the "old guard" leaders who treated white leaders with deference and sought their patronage.

Even as BSCP membership dropped after an aborted strike call in 1928, the union held a series of labor education conferences in Chicago that focused on building cross-class alliances for demanding basic rights for black Americans. These conferences succeeded in winning considerable black middle-class support for the BSCP. New Deal labor legislation helped reverse the BSCP's sagging fortunes as a labor organization, and in 1937 the Brotherhood signed a contract with the Pullman Company.

By then, Randolph had become the president of the new National Negro Congress (NNC), which soon surpassed the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People not only in militancy, but also in support among working-class blacks. This challenge for leadership of the civil rights movement helped push the NAACP closer to the "new crowd" position. In 1940, the NAACP added Randolph to its board of directors.

The protest politics practiced by Randolph and the BSCP reached a climax with the March on Washington Movement. The BSCP's Chicago office served as the major site for organizing this movement, which pressured President Franklin D. Roosevelt into issuing Executive Order 8802 in June 1941, thereby barring discrimination in employment in defense industries and government. After achieving this significant victory, black protest politics lost momentum, especially after the race riots of the summer of 1943. Nevertheless, the author asserts, "the growth of protest politics between the wars . . . led to the upheaval of Jim Crow in the years that followed."

In contrast to the few general histories of the BSCP, Beth Tompkins Bates has successfully portrayed the union in a new light by focusing on its role in the civil rights movement between 1925 and 1945. In doing so she has drawn upon an impressive array of

manuscript sources, newspapers and periodicals, and interviews, several of which she conducted. While this book is clearly written and argued, readers may question whether the BSCP played as central a role in early civil rights efforts as Bates suggests. But for those interested in that movement and the role of organized labor in it, this book certainly merits reading.

Matthew Hild

*Auburn University*

***Where No Flag Flies: Donald Davidson and the Southern Resistance.*** By Mark Royden Winchell. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000. xi, 392 pp. Preface, bibliography, index, acknowledgments. \$29.95 cloth.)

Donald Grady Davidson (1893-1968), the most consistently reactionary of the Vanderbilt Agrarians, is unlikely to have had his biography written by anyone but a conservative professor of English sympathetic to the "New Criticism," an approach to literature that favors textual explication over historical judgments. Liberal historians, who have found little to admire in Davidson's social views, will therefore not be surprised to find that the first full-scale biographical treatment of the neo-Confederate poet has come from a Vanderbilt-trained English professor whose previous books include a study of William F. Buckley Jr., the arch-conservative political commentator, and a biography of Cleanth Brooks, an architect of the New Criticism. True to his roots, Mark Royden Winchell, who inherited the Davidson biography from the late M.E. Bradford—a protégé of Davidson's "rumored to be President Ronald Reagan's first choice to direct the National Endowment for the Humanities"—has produced a study that will appeal to southern conservatives almost exclusively.

Although Winchell is a talented critic who offers discerning readings of Davidson's poems, he sometimes interjects conservative editorials into his readings of them. From lamenting publishers who have succumbed to "a plague of political correctness" to condemning "an age when many professors see the classroom as a bully pulpit for preaching their own beliefs," Winchell believes Davidson's critical reputation to be a casualty of liberal scholars who react to the poet's right-wing beliefs and ignore his art.

Winchell is especially annoyed by the liberals whom he finds preoccupied by Davidson's race attitudes. While Winchell does not avoid the issue of Davidson's diehard segregationism, and reports ample criticism of it, Winchell's tone can be defensive when he writes about Davidson and race. At times, he seems to play the role of an authorized biographer, as when he quotes from a 1997 letter by Davidson's grandchildren criticizing the *Nashville Tennessean* for running an article that charged Davidson with racism. (The newspaper declined to publish the letter, in which the grandchildren quoted a note Davidson wrote to his African-American maid after her husband died.) Winchell suggests that Davidson's racism did not enter its worst stage until the mid-1950s when he agitated for the infamous Tennessee Federation for Constitutional Government, but there is evidence in Davidson's correspondence and in his published writings that his prejudices were not weaker in the 1930s. The biography, for instance, makes no reference at all to one of Davidson's most explicitly racist writings, "Gulliver with Hay Fever," a 1937 attack on *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* by John Dollard.

Winchell's study will nevertheless prove useful to students of Southern literature and to scholars of the Agrarian movement. On Davidson's overseas duty during World War I, on his book reviewing for the *Nashville Tennessean*, on his longer prose works, on his evolution as a poet, on his relationship with other poets such as Robert Frost, and on his teaching career at Vanderbilt, Winchell uses Davidson's unpublished and published writings to cast new light on the poet's life and work.

While Winchell may have established that Davidson was a more important poet than critics have admitted, this biographical study is not likely to alter the view of those scholars who have been unable to understand why Davidson refused to give up the "Lost Cause" after most of the other Vanderbilt Agrarians did. Davidson's recalcitrance may have hurt his own legacy as much as he impeded the cause of Civil Rights in the South; indeed, had his Southernness been mutable, the final word in the subtitle of his biography might have been "renaissance" rather than "Resistance." Yet, even his fellow Southern writers were repulsed by his fanatical views. Davidson's most famous student and friend, Robert Penn Warren—who later won two Pulitzer prizes and became the nation's first poet laureate—communicated his views to his



daughter, the poet Rosanna Warren, with marked silence. "Donald Davidson," she recalled, "was a racist whose name was never spoken in our home."

Thomas A. Underwood

Harvard University

*It Seems to Me: Selected Letters of Eleanor Roosevelt.* Edited by Leonard C. Schlup and Donald W. Whisenhunt. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001. viii, 296 pp. Foreword, bibliography, index. \$30.00 cloth.)

Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the most admired women in the twentieth century, is also one of the most studied. However, apart from Allida Black's works, relatively little has been published about Roosevelt's life as a public figure after her husband Franklin's death in 1945. *It Seems to Me: Selected Letters of Eleanor Roosevelt* helps correct this imbalance.

This volume presents some of Eleanor Roosevelt's letters to public figures, world leaders, and individuals outside her family. The book begins with a 1912 letter to a girlhood friend, Isabella Ferguson, in which Eleanor, at 27, is already discussing politics, her uncle Theodore Roosevelt's presidential campaign on the Progressive "Bull Moose" ticket.

Most of the correspondence presented here was written after her White House years. The editors have selected a large number of letters to presidents and presidential aspirants from 1945 to 1962. Eleanor served Franklin principally in three roles: she gathered information from around the country, for a man who could not travel easily; she was often a trial balloon, testing public acceptance for liberal ideas; and she was a shrewd and impartial critic. She was also an advocate for women. These letters show how she influenced her husband's successors in much the same manner.

In 1948, she warned Harry Truman: "Believe me, Sir, it is going to be impossible to elect a Democrat . . . by appealing to conservatives. The Republicans are better conservatives than we are." During the 1956 presidential campaign, she suggested to Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic nominee, that he should support a federal health plan. She offered to test this idea in her own speeches so that if it was not well received, he could avoid the

topic. In 1961, she advised John Kennedy that people had found his press conferences hard to follow and advised that he address one question at a time.

Letters to national and international leaders like Walter White of the NAACP, Walter Reuther of the CIO, Winston Churchill, and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, wife of China's nationalist leader, show her commitment to issues that became central to the liberal agenda of the 1940s and 1950s and beyond: civil rights, Labor Unions, Cold War politics. Editors Schlup and Whisenhunt believe she "commanded more attention and proved more effective in proclaiming its message than did the leading male politicians of the era."

The book also shows Eleanor Roosevelt's extensive participation in international affairs. In 1945, Truman named her as delegate to the General Assembly of the United Nations. In 1946, she chaired the Commission on Human Rights of the Economic and Social Council, helping to draft the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. She served again as delegate to the General Assembly from 1949 to 1952, and in 1961 and 1962 under Kennedy.

Roosevelt's liberal vision informed her international perspective. By 1948, she realized that "Our real battlefield today is Asia and our real battle is the one between democracy and communism." She abhorred red-baiters like Sen. Joseph McCarthy and Richard Nixon, pointing out to Truman that "There is only one way of answering [the Communists] and that is by proving to the peoples of the world that Democracy meets their needs better." She advised President Eisenhower in 1952 that the United States had to eliminate the racial discrimination that hurt our image abroad.

The editors make an effort, not always entirely successful, to explain various people referenced in the letters, as well as something of their context. Sometimes they get the odd fact wrong (Isabella's husband Robert Munro-Ferguson died in 1922, not 1927; Arthurdale was in West Virginia, not New Jersey). They could have edited the individual letters still further, eliminating some of these peripheral details. But then the letters would not have given quite so complete a portrait of a woman whose interests, like her acquaintance, were far-reaching.

This book focuses on Eleanor Roosevelt's public persona, revealing her vast knowledge of domestic politics as well as her

increasing interest in world affairs, and showing her as a wise and confident observer of the political scene. It is a valuable source of primary material and a fascinating read.

Kristie Miller

McLean, Va.

*The Masculine Woman in America, 1890-1935.* By Laura L. Behling. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001. vii, 215 pp. Acknowledgments, works cited, index. \$35.95 cloth.)

In a growing field of scholarship on gender and sexuality, Laura Behling's study utilizes a historicized framework to analyze textual representations of "masculine women" from Henry James's *The Bostonians* to stories in popular magazines, and from *Life* magazine cartoons to the work of modernist scions like Gertrude Stein and Djuna Barnes. Behling argues that the image of the "masculine woman" originated with the suffrage movement, which claimed political rights for women but stopped short of challenging normative gender roles and heterosexuality. Antisuffragists critiqued women's demands to share in men's political prerogatives by representing suffragists as masculine in character and appearance. Even physically attractive suffragists were vulnerable to characterization as masculine in their sexual aggressiveness.

With the concurrent rise of theories of "sexual inversion," sexologists diagnosed women as deviants and perverts for rejecting traditional gender roles. Those identified as "inverts" were transgressive not merely because they engaged in same-sex relationships but because of the gender reversals upon which such relationships were thought to be predicated. American men and women's writings sought to sterilize this threat by "disenfranchising" feminists; a recurrent plot reinscribed the emancipated, modern woman as feminine, only awaiting a man's seduction to fall back into her natural place. One of the most striking examples Behling gives is of Richard Washburn Child's short story, "Feminist," in which both the protagonist Hester Golden and her "feminist" snake are tamed by males and by the sex instinct. Thus, even fiction that did not expressly invoke politics and the franchise nevertheless performed the cultural work of containing the threat to social and sexual order that suffragism implied.



Throughout the book, Behling employs an interdisciplinary perspective, moving deftly back and forth from canonical literature to the popular press. The most compelling chapter studies how parody, despite its subversive elements, nevertheless failed to promote the acceptance of the masculine woman. By citing such a wide range of examples, Behling is able to persuade the reader of the visibility of the masculine woman in the print and visual cultures of the early twentieth-century United States. In contrast to scholarship that has depicted homosexuals as “hidden from history,” Behling shows that “inverted” masculine women were not shadowy figures at all, but rather crucial symbols of the gender disorder that many Americans associated with feminism. They represented a radical possibility for social transformation that suffragists increasingly disowned.

*The Masculine Woman in America* remains literary analysis at heart, however, limiting its usefulness to historians of women and sexuality. The historical and political framework into which Behling places this iconic figure becomes just a reference point after the opening two chapters. Behling does not consider how feminism itself changed during these decades of transformation. Given the damning power of charges that women’s rights advocates were “unsexing” themselves, from Seneca Falls onward, one would expect the woman suffrage movement to have failed. Yet it did not; and Behling’s methodology precludes considering feminists’ public support for “normative” gender roles as a political strategy and rhetorical device. Furthermore, cultural definitions of femininity and masculinity shifted dramatically during this period; behaviors and aspects of dress and appearance that signaled a woman as “masculine” in the 1890s might be considered entirely appropriate for a woman of the 1930s. The trap of conflating gender and sexuality is not so easily avoided either. Behling attempts to separate gender and sexuality as distinct, albeit connected, categories of analysis. Yet, she explicitly equates masculine/feminine pairings within lesbian couples as heterosexist in nature and effect—a difficult position to defend after the pathbreaking scholarship of Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy and Madeline Davis on working-class lesbians. A more nuanced historical context would have helped to enrich this intriguing study and to answer some of the valuable questions it raises.

Laura R. Prieto

Simmons College

*Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Martin Luther King, Jr., Eight White Religious Leaders, and the "Letter from Birmingham Jail."* By S. Jonathan Bass. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001. xiv, 322 pp. Preface, abbreviations used in the notes, introduction, conclusion, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.)

*Birmingham's Revolutionaries: The Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth and the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights.* Edited by Majorie L. White and Andrew M. Manis. (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2000. xi. 80 pp. Preface, introduction, contributors. \$22 cloth.)

These works focus on the role played by religious leaders and religious organizations during the confrontations between civil rights activists and the political establishment in Birmingham, Alabama, during the spring of 1963. Both identify the Birmingham confrontations as a major turning point in the Civil Rights movement and agree that this turning point was made possible by careful planning and organizing. They argue that Birmingham citizens, not Martin Luther King, Jr. or the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), were responsible for the transformations that eventually took place in the city. Beyond these points the books diverge in their emphasis.

*Blessed Are the Peacemakers* focuses on the writing of Martin Luther King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail" and the impact the letter had on the Civil Rights movement in general and on the lives of the eight white Birmingham clergy (Jewish, Catholic and Protestant) of various faiths to whom it was addressed. The book is divided into three major sections. The first examines the backgrounds of the eight clergy as well as their personal and religious beliefs. The second focuses on the circumstances and strategy around King's creation of the letter and its publication. The final section examines the reactions to and impact of the letter on the lives and beliefs of the eight white clergymen. The research is based on extensive archival research as well as personal interviews with many of the participants.

The white clergy named in King's letter had issued a statement to the press (included in an appendix) arguing against the use of nonviolent direct action. They viewed such action as with-

out a political, moral, or ethical base and likely to incite hatred and violence. They called upon blacks and whites to follow the principle of "law and order and common sense." Earlier they had issued a statement to opponents of desegregation arguing that there was no religious or legal basis to their opposition and calling for compliance with law and court decisions. All of the clergy are presented as moderates who believed in peaceful, slow change.

Bass places the eight clergy in the context of their times and demonstrates the impact of their backgrounds upon their personal, political and religious beliefs. The organizational structure of each man's particular religious group influenced the degree of retribution he received for speaking out. Bass also argues that older clergy were less able to adapt to change and break out of the paternalistic views toward blacks prevalent in the South. The younger clergy were more adaptable due to life experiences that brought them into greater contact with those of differing classes, races, and religions. Most were outspoken in their support for integration or at least support of legal directives and statutes calling for integration.

King's letter to them is depicted as a public relations tool designed by King and SCLC leaders to garner national media attention and public support in the wake of less than successful demonstrations in Albany, Georgia. Birmingham and the clergy's statement offered the opportunity to implement plans for a letter that had been in the discussion stage. Bass describes the development of the letter, its structure (an epistle similar in style to that of St. Paul), its many revisions, the multiple forms it took even after its initial release, its symbolic references, and its impacts.

The letter was released to the press and never delivered to the eight clergy to whom it was addressed. Still, it changed their lives dramatically. The public, political leaders, and other clergy vilified them. One side condemned them for failing to view the Civil Rights movement as a moral cause (the thrust of the King letter), often portraying them as virulent segregationists. The other side took their statements and the King letter as evidence of support for integration and civil rights. Some of the eight stayed in Birmingham and became active supporters of integration. Others were basically forced from their pulpits for their moderate stands. All felt unjustly targeted by the King letter.



Bass's work offers a unique view of the Birmingham demonstrations and their aftermath. It is a story that deserves telling; here the telling is done well.

The central premise of *Birmingham Revolutionaries* is that the protests in Birmingham were the result of a "blue collar, faith-based movement" lead by the pastors of Birmingham's working class Afro-American churches, particularly Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth. King and SCLC personnel were invited into the city. Their work and their success were dependent upon the groundwork laid by the pastors and congregations in the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR). These pastors and congregations, not the city's middle-class African-American churches, the NAACP, or the SCLC, were the cornerstone of the demonstrations.

This brief book takes its title from the name of a symposium held in Birmingham in 1998. Essays in the volume represent the unedited speeches presented at the event with footnotes added. The footnotes include references to newspaper coverage of the events discussed as well as the works of historians, including those of the contributors to the volume, and interviews.

Wilson Fallin Jr. writes about the church as the central institution in the life of black Americans, the founding of the ACMHR, and King's role in the Birmingham movement. He depicts King as bringing two key elements to the movement: a national reputation and national media attention. He credits King with broadening the movement in Birmingham by bringing in Black professionals and pastors from the largest black churches. Glenn T. Eskew focuses on Shuttlesworth's leadership and the relationship of the black middle-class churches to the Birmingham movement.

Aldon D. Morris writes that histories that focus on the Civil Rights movement from the perspective of national institutions and administrations or King's charismatic leadership miss the key factor that it was a local, church-based movement. He calls the Birmingham movement the "most significant," representing the coming of age of nonviolent direct action. Andrew M. Manis discusses Fred Shuttlesworth's background and style as an inspirational leader. Wyatt T. Walker and Fred Shuttlesworth present brief remembrances of the events from their perspectives as direct participants.

While the volume is interesting, it offers only brief insights. Readers will be better served reading the larger works of some of

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the contributors: Eskew's *But for Birmingham: The Local and the National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle*, Fallin's *The African American Church in Birmingham, 1815-1963: A Shelter in a Storm*, or Manis's *A Fire You Can't Out: The Civil Rights Life of Birmingham's Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth*.

Anne Permaloff

Auburn University at Montgomery

***Bay of Pigs: An Oral History of Brigade 2506.*** By Victor Andrés Triay. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001. xi, 200pp. Preface, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 cloth.)

On April 17, 1961, Brigade 2506, a brigade composed of 1,300 Cuban expatriates sponsored and trained by the Central Intelligence Agency, landed on southern Cuba's Ciénega de Zapata. Commonly known as the Bay of Pigs invasion, this ill-fated attempt to liberate Cuba from Fidel Castro's communist dictatorship became one of the most controversial and debatable events in the history of the Cold War. Many blame the CIA's poor intelligence gathering and dismal coordination for the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Others indicate that President John F. Kennedy's lack of resolve was the major reason for the debacle.

While there have been numerous studies concerning the Bay of Pigs invasion, the story of the men who participated in this event had lain dormant for forty years until the publication of this oral history. Divided into seven chapters and covering interviews with forty *brigadistas*, as well as several of their female relatives and one CIA Americas adviser, Triay's book provides valuable eyewitness accounts concerning the saga of the 2506. The interviews were conducted in Spanish, accurately translated into English, and converted into narratives. A current photograph of each *brigadista* or relative and a biographical sketch precede each narrative.

The author prefaces all of his chapters with a brief narrative based on secondary sources. These narratives provide an overview of particular events. Each of them is extremely helpful to the reader and contributes to set the tone of each *brigadista's* account. Furthermore, they are all accurate, unbiased, well balanced, and explicitly detailed.

In tracing the brigade's demographic composition, Triay breaks the myth created by the Castro regime that the *brigadistas* were

either members of Cuba's aristocracy or *Batistianos* (followers of former dictator Fulgencio Batista). According to Triay's research, the brigade represented a cross-section of Cuban society composed of whites, blacks, peasants, aristocrats, laborers, Catholics, Protestants, *Batistianos* and *ex-Fidelistas* (followers of Fidel Castro).

Reliving the Bay of Pigs is the order of the day in this oral history study. Throughout its pages, the reader experiences the brigade's training days in the Guatemalan highlands, its air force preemptive strikes over Cuban air bases in Santiago de Cuba and Havana, the sailing from Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, the landing at Playa Larga and Playa Girón, the hard-fought battle of San Blas, the brigade's retreat and eventual capture, the *brigadistas'* twenty-month imprisonment in the dungeons of the Castillo del Príncipe and the Presidio Model in the Isle of Pines, and the brigade's release and return to the United States.

Through these sensitive eyewitness accounts, one can certainly empathize with the *brigadistas'* frustration as Kennedy's obsession with keeping American involvement a secret prompted him to cancel the second wave of air strikes against Castro's miniscule air force. This decision doomed the brigade even before it landed on Cuban shores, for Castro's air force would rule the skies. Yet, in spite of their misfortune and painful human experience, the *brigadistas* earn the reader's respect and even admiration.

In practically all of the interviews, the *brigadistas'* condemnation of the Castro regime is equally matched by their vituperation of John F. Kennedy. One cannot help but notice their resentment for the man, who in their eyes, betrayed them by canceling the air strikes. This bitterness is further noticed as they recollect that Kennedy, contrary to the recommendations of his Joint Chiefs of Staff, prohibited the use of American air cover once Castro's army launched its counteroffensive.

While the book contains a myriad of photographs and most helpful index, it is disappointing to notice that there is no map of Cuba. Readers not familiar with Cuban geography will find it difficult to identify where the military action took place. Additionally, Carlos Rodríguez Santana's nickname—the man whom the brigade chose to honor his accidental death in the Guatemalan training camps with his enlisted number of 2506—is listed as “Carlyle” when it should be “Carlay.”

However, these negatives should not detract from the overall quality of this superb book. Víctor Andrés Triay as well as the



*brigadistas* should be congratulated for providing us with a most moving and interesting first-hand account of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

José B. Fernández

*University of Central Florida*

***The Vietnam War on Campus: Other Voices, More Distant Drums.***

Edited by Marc Jason Gilbert. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001. xiv, 268 pp. Preface and acknowledgments, introduction, select bibliography, index, about the contributors. \$67.50 cloth.)

The thirteen essays in *The Vietnam War on Campus* feature a fascinating, if somewhat improbable cast of antiwar activists that includes feminists, Catholics, conservatives, Midwesterners, Southerners, and high school students. Editor Marc Jason Gilbert, a fixture among scholars of the Vietnam War, gathered a cross-section of writers, such as well-known historians Kenneth Heineman, Barbara Tischler, and Anthony Edmonds, and famous participants like veteran W.D. Ehrhart. The book expands the original scope of Heineman's *Campus Wars* (1993), which shows that a number of state universities played key roles in the anti-Vietnam War movement and dispels the popular myth that the protest culture was primarily an elite school phenomenon. What emerges is an informative and, at times, entertaining collage of stories that reflects the movement's rich diversity of individuals, opinions, and tactics of protest.

Some of the topics covered will be familiar to well-versed readers of the Vietnam War. Tischler's piece on feminism, for example, touches on common themes but also presents an insightful discussion of military women and antiwar activism. Heineman provides a good synthesis of the Catholic Church's Vietnam War difficulties, but those with a keen interest in the period would probably benefit more from reading James Carroll's compelling memoir, *An American Requiem* (1996).

The remaining chapters focus on unexplored terrain, such as historian Stephen Wheeler's examination of one of the more elusive aspects of the war—the extent to which the South's experience differed in comparison to the rest of America. Wheeler contends that the region's military tradition and the convergence of the civil

rights and antiwar movement on the national level created an almost untenable situation for student liberals, who sought to establish an antiwar presence in a conservative South. His argument appears sound but readers should be wary. The essay is disappointingly thin, and surprisingly, he does not mention the clash between police and student protesters at Jackson State College in Mississippi, which resulted in the death of two young African Americans.

Like Wheeler, Edmonds and his co-author, Joel Shrock, raise important issues about campus activism but leave out too much of the story. For example, they are correct in asserting that large pieces of the antiwar puzzle remain unsolved because scholars have neglected smaller regional and mid-sized institutions like Ball State, which by far outnumbered the flagship and elite schools during the Vietnam era. Yet, they conclude that Ball State students, for the most part, cared little about the war. In this instance, Edmonds and Shrock may be correct; however, their findings are primarily based on articles from the campus newspaper, which might have missed student protesters who dabbled in underground activities. Using other sources, such as oral history, private correspondence, and memoirs (if they exist), Edmonds and Shrock may have found more going on beneath the surface.

Perhaps, Ehrhart's personal reflections and the other three chapters on the high school experience are the most valuable sections of the book. Drawing on interviews, letters, court records, and other sources, these essays explore the mind of eighteen-year-old high school students, both female and male, and that of their teachers, as Vietnam intruded on their world and as they weighed their decisions. In many ways, the high school experience mirrored the college one for some young people, who for the first time in their lives became politically active as they had to face the harsh realities of the draft. At times, opposition to the draft linked naïve high school students and better-informed college-aged conservatives and libertarians who opposed the selective service system more than the war. Ehrhart's essay and the others reveal an interesting difference between tenured university professors, who could speak their mind, and more vulnerable high school teachers who operated within a patriotic and often authoritarian educational system, and sometimes agonized over whether to risk their jobs and openly express antiwar opinions.

*The Vietnam War on Campus* uses an innovative approach to move beyond the traditional confines of university grounds to incorporate unheard voices. Although uneven in sections, it is a solid addition to the growing literature on the antiwar movement, and it points scholars to a number of areas requiring further work.

John Ernst

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***Television Histories: Shaping Collective Memory in the Media Age.***

Edited by Gary R. Edgerton and Peter C. Rollins. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2001. iv, 383 pp. Introduction, selected bibliography, television and film index, general index. \$29.95 cloth.)

"Television is the principal means by which most people learn about history today," asserts Gary R. Edgerton in the introduction to this new volume of essays. He and fellow editor Peter C. Rollins take this contention not as a thesis to be proved, but as a premise upon which to build. As a result, the work they have compiled presents an impressive and useful array of complementary studies. The chapters share a common interest in helping readers think about how the assumptions embodied in television programming contribute to broader historical sensibilities. Despite appearances, this thoughtful, jargon-free volume is not designed for media scholars or historians of television. Instead, it helps those of us who care about history think more clearly about how television can shape historical thinking among our friends, neighbors, and students.

Edgerton and Rollins divide the contributions thematically. The first section tackles history's role in prime-time programs. In his essay, Steve Anderson argues that the recreation of historical event on programs as diverse as *Star Trek* and Steve Allen's *Meeting of the Minds* indicates "a cultural need to imagine a type of history that is productive rather than merely reproductive and . . . open to interaction with the present." Anderson's emphasis on television's use of history for contemporary purposes finds echoes in Mimi White's examination of gender in the period-based *Young Indiana Jones* and *Doctor Quinn, Medicine Woman*, Robert Hanke's analysis of *Quantum Leap*, and Daniel Marcus's investigation of the 1964-1965 docudrama *Profiles in Courage*.



The editors' own research centers on television documentaries, and they devote the book's next segment to the genre. Rollins explains how the *Victory at Sea* films failed to accurately document their subject precisely *because* they were so great to watch. Edgerton uses *Thomas Jefferson* to elucidate what he calls Ken Burns's "poetic realism." He builds upon earlier critiques of the ubiquitous documentarian, but his goal is to sharpen our understanding rather than merely to pile on abuse. The section's other two essays surprise by their ability engage the general reader in the seemingly marginal: Dutch World War II documentaries (Chris Vos) and biographies of Queen Lili'uokalani (Carolyn Anderson). Their common subject—the contest over local history—hits home even to those of us with little interest in Holland or Hawai'i.

Sadly, the section focusing on news and public affairs programming is the volume's weakest link. Thomas Doherty's essay searches for the homosexual subtext in the Army-McCarthy hearings, but its explanations of sexuality's place in the red-hunting mindset outshine its analyses of television content. Netta Ha-Ilan's contention that Israel's state-run news outlets "commemorate social cohesiveness" through a "ceremonial mode of address" may help us think about news reporting more generally, but the prose will neutralize most historians' interest before they get the article's point. David Culbert's essay on coverage of the Berlin Wall seems to be searching for a point. Philip M. Taylor's article on television news, however, redeems the quartet. His trenchant appraisal reminds historians that they cannot think about "the news" as a simple and obvious primary source.

Like Taylor, the authors who conclude the volume move away from the content of programs and genres to more general themes. Historians will probably find these articles' subject matter, style, and methodology to be the book's most appealing as well. Brian Taves's essay explains how vagaries of the television industry play into programming decisions at the History Channel. James Baughman's study of Jack Benny's career illustrates what the television star did *right*. Even though historians have largely ignored Benny's success, Baughman argues, his story tells us at least as much about the medium and its audience as the comedian's flashier contemporaries. Douglas Gomery, who earlier forced historians to rethink easy explanations about television's effects on the postwar movie industry, once again shakes up our accepted notions by reminding us of early television's local flavor. Michael

Curtin takes that new catchword, globalization, and argues that despite the power of multinational conglomerates, "globalization . . . should not be confused with homogenization."

Kathryn Helgesen Fuller-Seeley's bibliographic conclusion reminds us that this engaging, thoughtful, and sound volume should help scholars of all types reconsider television's role in shaping public perceptions of history.

Spencer Downing

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***American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century.*** By Gary Gerstle. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001. xv, 454 pp. List of figures, acknowledgments, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth).

Race and nationalism are concepts which intrigue numerous historians. Few, however, have combined the two elements to explain a topic as successfully as Gary Gerstle in *American Crucible*. In an ambitious yet magnificent synthesis, Gerstle demonstrates the indispensable role race played in shaping, refining, and challenging American national identity throughout the twentieth century. He argues, "The pursuit of two powerful and contradictory ideals—civic and the racial," defined America during the period. Gerstle identified "racial nationalism" as the belief America "ought to maximize the opportunities for its 'racial superiors' and limit those of its 'racial inferiors,'" while "civic nationalism" espoused political, social, and economic equality for citizens "irrespective of race, ethnicity, or nationality." Gerstle focuses upon "the most influential architects of the twentieth century nation" such as political liberals, government agencies, and popular culture artists to demonstrate the compatibility, coexistence, and contradictions of racial and civic nationalism through the era. Because of its provocative arguments, *American Crucible* is a significant contribution to the understanding of race and nationalism in United States history.

Gerstle begins his work with an analysis of Theodore Roosevelt's civic and racial ideologies. According to Gerstle, Roosevelt's Rough Riders, New Nationalism, and Progressive Party outlined twentieth-century American nationalism and articulated the contradictions of national identity that characterized liberal

politics throughout the 1900s. Although Roosevelt expressed faith in political equality, economic security, and social opportunity for all Americans, he maintained that only whites deserved national inclusion. Roosevelt also argued that war benefit the nation by solidifying national loyalty and ameliorating ethnic differences. World War I and its aftermath strengthened the "Rooseveltian nation" through restrictions that limited immigration from countries which allegedly produced radical ideologies contrary to American values. Gerstle argues that the acts made ethnic exclusion "a defining feature of modern America." Civic nationalism, however, marginalized race during the New Deal because its programs emphasized the economic opportunities available to all residents. Yet, World War II reinforced the importance of racial nationalism in American identity. Many have used the wartime internment of Japanese-Americans to prove similar points, but Gerstle uses the segregation of the United States military to illustrate his claim. The war strengthened many civic ideals, but the segregation of the armed forces proved "American was, first and foremost, a white nation." The Cold War postponed internal conflict, but tensions between racial and civic nationalism exploded in the 1960s.

Gerstle's chapters on the Civil Rights movement and Vietnam are his most fascinating. The struggle for racial equality "triggered the unraveling of the Rooseveltian nation" because it forced America to examine and transcend the contradictions between its racial and civic nationalism. Gerstle emphasizes Martin Luther King's importance as movement leader because he used civic ideals to justify the end of racism. Particularly interesting is Gerstle's explanation of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and its experiences as the point where civic and racial ideals permanently split, a new interpretation of a familiar event. The black separatist movement gained momentum after the 1964 Democratic convention and an Afrocentric attitude dominated the Civil Rights movement by 1968. Simultaneously, the Vietnam War accelerated the collapse of racial nationalism because it inspired additional groups to question traditional civic ideals. Protest surrounding Vietnam, therefore, converged with black disillusionment to undermine America's civic nationalism. Disillusioned groups expressed a "growing belief in the fraudulence of American democratic ideals" and ended the Rooseveltian nation by 1980.



The book concludes with an epilogue that assesses the future of American nationalism. Although it forms the weakest part of his study, Gerstle makes the interesting point that racial and civic elements from crucial components of American nationalism. A tradition of racial exclusion often solidified the nation while civic ideals presented oppressed groups with a platform from which to address their grievances. The speculative nature of the book's ending proves more valuable to political scientists than historians. Yet despite its awkward finish, Gerstle provides an imaginative synthesis of how race influenced, supported, and ultimately destroyed the basis of twentieth-century American identity. Most importantly, *American Crucible* encourages scholars to examine race, nationalism, and the relationship between the two throughout American history from fresh perspectives and should influence future research.

J. Michael Butler

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## Book Notes

*André Michaux in Florida: An Eighteenth-Century Botanical Journey.* By Walter Kingsley Taylor and Eliane M. Norman. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. xvii, 246 pp. List of figures, photos, maps, preface, epilogue, appendices, literature cited, index. \$39.95 cloth.)

Set around the time of the American Revolution, *André Michaux in Florida* recounts the immersion of France's "botanist to the king" in the state's tropical wilderness. Michaux spent eleven years studying the diverse flora of the New World. He was charged with transporting specimen back to France to reforest the countryside and populate royal gardens on the Continent. The expedition ranged from the Hudson Bay to the Bahamas and from the eastern seaboard to the Appalachian Mountains, providing a comprehensive canon of eighteenth-century American flora for scientists to examine.

Michaux recorded his findings in a journal—a collection of ten volumes, indicating the extensive nature of his observations—from which professors Walter Kingsley Taylor and Eliane M. Norman pared the three months he spent in Florida. *André Michaux in Florida* is more than simply a botanical investigation; the wealth of information provided in the journal paints the captivating picture of a rural America long lost to history. Taylor and Norman capture the ebullient spirit of the French botanist through his interactions with the local Floridians and his associations with American naturalists like William Bartram. His exuberance clearly influences the authors, making this multi-discipline book a light but informative read.

Charles E. Crosby

***Buffalo Tiger: A Life in the Everglades.*** By Buffalo Tiger and Harry A. Kersey Jr. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 185 pp. List of illustrations, introduction, acknowledgments, afterword, appendix, notes, index. \$27.95 cloth.)

Buffalo Tiger, one of the most influential Indian leaders in the modern southeastern United States, tells his life story in *Buffalo Tiger: A Life in the Everglades*. Under his leadership, the Miccosukee tribe of south Florida attained official recognition from the federal government and became the first modern tribe to exercise total control over its own financial and governmental affairs in the 1970s. He also led them in fighting to protect the natural resources of their land.

*Buffalo Tiger* describes growing up in a Miccosukee village, learning to interact with the "white man," becoming the spokesman for a tribe, fighting for recognition from the United States government, and protecting traditional Indian culture from an encroaching modern society. The book provides a fascinating look at an Indian tribe that has managed to maintain an incredibly traditional way of life and an innovative leader who devoted much of his own life to preserving their independence.

Ashley E. Moreshead

***Wingless Eagle: U.S. Army Aviation through World War I.*** By Herbert A. Johnson. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001. xvi, 298 pp. Preface, introduction, epilogue, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.)

Herbert Johnson presents a very thorough study of the United States' development of military aviation from the formation of the Aeronautical Division in 1907 to the Air Service's attempts to produce battle-worthy aircraft and aviators during the First World War. He focuses on the relationship between military aviation and the civilian "aeronaut constituency," as well as the control struggles within the army and the constant battle for government funding. As the metaphor "wingless eagle" (taken from a 1916 cartoon) would suggest, the military's aviation program was crippled by insufficient funds and attitudes of mistrust within and outside the military so much that the United States was forced to rely on European aircraft



during the war. Even though the world's first successful flight had taken place in America, such poor management of the program set the U.S. military behind France and England in aviation advancement by the time the war started. When World War I ended, the future of U.S. army aviation was still quite a mystery.

Johnson's book reveals the fallacy of overly nostalgic or idealistic views of early military aviation. He succeeds in defining a complex period of military history within the framework of American culture.

Ashley E. Moreshead

***Images of America: St. Cloud.*** By Jim Robison and Robert A Fisk. (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2002. Acknowledgments, introduction, epilogue. 128 pp. \$19.99 paperback.)

A fascinating addition to the Images of America series by Arcadia Publishing, *St. Cloud* describes the development of this central Florida area from a sugar plantation, veterans' colony, and settlement of British farmers into an enduring community. Collaborators Jim Robison and Robert A. Fisk have collected wonderfully engaging photographs of original buildings and homes as well as settlers who established various sections of the community. These pictures date from the 1880s to the 1960s, capturing the nature of this town's transformation.

Ashley E. Moreshead

***The History of Southern Women's Literature.*** Edited by Carolyn Perry and Mary Louise Weaks. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002. xvii, 689 pp. Preface, introduction, afterword, appendix, bibliography, contributors, index. \$49.95 cloth.)

*The History of Southern Women's Literature* is an incredible study of women writers whose works have influenced and been influenced by the American South. The book is a collection of essays by more than seventy contributors, grouped in chronological sections from "The Antebellum and Bellum South" to "The Contemporary South." Most focus on individual authors such as

Harper Lee, Kate Chopin, and Maya Angelou, but many chapters are also devoted to categories like "Early African American Women Writers," "Gender Issues in the Old South," and "The Modern Novel." The arrangement of the book helps the reader understand the development of different genres as well as the changing social and cultural context in and about which Southern women have written. It is an excellent tribute to authors who have provided America with an abundance of wonderful literature.

Ashley E. Moreshead

*A Bibliography of Florida. Vol. 4, 1900-1915.* By James A. Servies and Lana D. Servies. (Pensacola, Fla.: King & Queen Books, 2002. xxi, 551 pp. Introduction, library location symbols, references, abbreviations, index. \$165 hardback.)

This massive collection of literature on Florida is the fourth and final volume of a comprehensive bibliographic effort. Focusing on works published between 1900 and the outbreak of World War I, the guide offers a canon of books, pamphlets, broadsides, maps, journal articles, literary productions, and government and corporate documents that pertain to the Sunshine State, its outlying islands, and its relations with other states. The material is chronologically organized and the titles are annotated with special attention to content on Florida. All 5,564 entries are thoroughly indexed, making this work an essential component of any state library. Along with the three preceding volumes, the collection is an indispensable resource for accessing Florida's past.

Charles E. Crosby

*Selling Yellowstone: Capitalism and the Construction of Nature.* By Mark Daniel Barringer. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002. viii, 238 pp. Preface, introduction, conclusion, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.)

The romanticization of the Old West is one of the fundamental conceptions of American history that thrives in the modern urban world. Doting infatuation and obsequious reverence for the

frontier life inspire an indelible pursuit of the rustic beauty of the wilderness. And there is no more tangible link to America's untainted past than Yellowstone National Park, the most scenic and recognizable of all the country's national parks. This wilderness paradise has steadfastly survived as a monument to the West, as much an ideology as a geographical location.

Mark Daniel Barringer argues, however, that the traditional presentation of Yellowstone is little more than a mask for the commercialization and commodification of the American past. He critically examines the role that businesses played in the development of the park, the shaping of the uncontaminated landscape, and the mythological representation of the Old West. Tracing the development of the nation's oldest national park, Barringer looks at the transformations that Yellowstone experienced in an effort to facilitate the image of the park, including the creation of roads and the population control of specific animal species. *Selling Yellowstone* is a captivating look at the "construction of nature" in America's greatest wilderness, a seemingly incongruous dichotomy of capitalism and preservation.

Charles E. Crosby

***The Political Languages of Emancipation in the British Caribbean and the U. S. South.*** By Demetrius L. Eudell. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. x, 238 pp. Acknowledgments, introduction, conclusion, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth, \$18.95 paper.)

The self-proclaimed goal of *The Political Languages of Emancipation* is to complement the wealth of information already available regarding the transition to the post-slavery period. Demetrius Eudell promotes the notion that slavery had both a productive and a signifying mechanism by examining that transitional period in the context of political language. Careful to distinguish his argument from the connotations of ideology, Eudell offers a comparative study of ex-slaves in Jamaica and South Carolina to help explain why the emancipation process left so many fundamental questions unanswered, thus predicating the renewed conflict a century later.



In the process of comparing the Caribbean and South Carolinian encounters, the author elucidates many commonalities between the two societies. These shared experiences challenge the thesis of American exceptionalism while promoting an examination based on a world systems approach. Eudell addresses the intellectual background of his study, the efforts of slaveholders to circumscribe the freedom of ex-slaves, the roles of special magistrates and the Freedmen's Bureau in emancipation, the contradiction of coercing ex-slaves into a free market system, and the post-slavery form of racial subordination. The combination of these factors created a political language that reinforced the economic subordination of ex-slaves after emancipation.

Charles E. Crosby

***The Stilwell Letters: A Georgian in Longstreet's Corps, Army of Northern Virginia.*** Edited by Ronald H. Moseley. (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2002. xxviii, 309 pp. Abbreviations and short titles, foreword, preface, background and acknowledgments, maps, epilog, index. \$35.00 hardback.)

As a witness to one of the most tragic and definitive moments in American history, Private William Ross Stilwell of Company F, 53rd Regiment Georgia Volunteer Infantry, left behind a vivid interpretation of his experiences as a Confederate soldier. Covering events from Gettysburg to Chancellorsville, his personal letters contribute a unique perspective that portrays the Civil War in more human terms. Ronald Moseley has recognized the potential value of those letters to the greater historical community and has seized the opportunity to reorganize them in a more legible form. Though the collection was typed and bound in the 1940s, Moseley has gone back to the original text of the letters to edit errors in the transcription process and to try and identify the context in which the letters were written. To that end, he has also visited an overwhelming majority of the sites that Stilwell discussed and has made a valiant attempt to reconstruct the social milieu that inspired the private's correspondence. While not a unique contribution to the general body of evidence on the Civil War, *The Stilwell Letters* is nonetheless a fascinating compilation of individual Civil War-era perspective and "big picture" context.

Charles E. Crosby