BOOK REVIEWS

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WORD PROCESSING: LAURIE GEORGE
That North Africa was one of the key regions of the late Roman Empire has long been recognized by modern scholarship. It is perhaps more intensely studied than any other province except Egypt, but the history of Roman Africa has often been written mainly on the basis of written sources, despite the wealth of archaeological material. Fieldwork done in the 1980s and 1990s has, however, contributed new knowledge and understanding of the rural land- and townscapes and their development in the early empire and late antiquity. The first decade of this millennium has seen the publication of several important analyses, and Leslie Dossey’s *Peasant and Empire in Christian North Africa* is one such groundbreaking work.

The book is a revised version of a Harvard Ph.D. dissertation and is divided into three parts, each with two chapters. It includes an introduction, an overview of the history of the Maghreb region from the original Berber society to the Vandal invasion in the fifth century CE, a conclusion, bibliography, and an index. Dossey’s analysis represents an integrated approach, and the evidence considered here encompasses a wide range of material and integrates the archaeological evidence with the epigraphic and literary sources.

In part 1, entitled “The Making of the Peasant Consumer,” Dossey discusses the patterns of rural consumption and settlement from the late Punic period to late antiquity. She summarizes the results of recent archaeological surveys in Tunisia that show that North Africa prospered in the fourth and fifth centuries CE. The author argues that the so-called “late antique consumer revolution became possible because the political and social constraints on peasant consumption had begun to break down” (96). It is a fascinating suggestion, but Dossey may overstate the effects of the third-century crisis and the revolts in North Africa in order to strengthen her argument. In the second part of her book, the author analyzes the rural communities and the many rural bishops, and in the third part, the subject is the *circumcellions*. These two chapters are the most innovative parts of the study, because Dossey uses anonymous Christian sermons that are very rarely used by ancient historians. The short conclusion is, in fact, only a summary of the many results and insights of the book.

Dossey has brought together an impressively wide range of sources and presents a new interpretation of the peasantry that, in this case, cannot be labeled...
“people without history.” The eighty pages of endnotes and thirty-five-page bibliography are gold mines of references to ancient literary sources and modern scholarship, and there are only a few (mostly German) omissions. Dossey advances our understanding of the agricultural society of Christian North Africa and has made a major contribution to the study of this important facet of the later Roman Empire and the Vandals.

University of Southern Denmark  
Jesper Carlsen


As the war in Afghanistan enters its eleventh year, the most optimistic description of the conflict is probably calling it a stalemate, which actually represents a defeat for the counterinsurgent forces (i.e., the United States and NATO). A more realistic description of the war in Afghanistan is that it has become a $440 billion quagmire. According to the _Los Angeles Times_, the most recent National Intelligence Estimate on the war produced by the United States intelligence community, which often represents the least negative interpretation and the one on which all participating agencies can agree, paints a “gloomy picture” and suggests the war has become a “grim situation.”

James Fergusson, a British journalist who has covered Afghanistan, suggests in his book _Taliban: The Unknown Enemy_ that the war has become a mess primarily because the West has a basic misunderstanding of the nature of the Taliban. Although the West still looks at the Taliban as a bunch of black-turbaned, bearded, draconian fanatics toting Kalashnikovs and the Qur’an, according to Fergusson the Taliban are not really that bad, just misunderstood. The Taliban, according to Fergusson, basically represent a Pashtun “tribal” movement that reflects dominant ideas that are firmly rooted in Afghanistan’s cultural, religious, and historical experience. He writes that the Taliban’s “conservatism [differs] from the rest of the country not in kind, but in degree” (89). But the most central thesis that Fergusson presents is that the key to peace in Afghanistan must be negotiations (peace talks, reconciliation, reintegration) with the Taliban to affect a negotiated (political) settlement that incorporates the Taliban into the Afghan government.

The Taliban “insurgency” is actually a _jihad_ or at least an _insurgency wrapped in the narrative of jihad_. Jihads have been a mainstay of Afghanistan’s history and represent a religious obligation that Afghans take extremely
seriously. Importantly, no jihad in the history of mankind has ever ended with a negotiated settlement. There is not going to be anything resembling meaningful negotiations until all foreign soldiers have left Afghanistan. Mullah Omar, the Amir ul' Momineen (Leader of the Faithful), has made that perfectly clear, which Fergusson acknowledges (367). Mullah Omar has stated unequivocally that anyone engaging in talks with the infidel government in Kabul will be liquidated. The 2010 purge of so-called “moderates” by the Quetta Shura and Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence Department (ISI) makes enforcement of this ironclad—as Stalin’s purge did in the 1930s. The Taliban leadership that matter—the Quetta Shura—are not going to negotiate with the orders of Allah any more than a Catholic priest can negotiate getting married with the pope. Meaningful peace talks with the real leaders of the Taliban are not going to happen. And the corollary myth that significant numbers of the enemy are going to switch from a perceived winning side to a perceived losing side via “reconciliation”—so they can either be shot now or hung from lampposts in a few years—is too silly to take seriously. Hence, though there is much to admire about Fergusson’s book, its major fault is his misinterpretation of what the real and important Taliban leadership represent—the very charge that he makes against Western politicians and diplomats.

Department of National Security Affairs and Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California


In the aftermath of September 11, the quest to understand the Middle East has become an American “national obsession,” in which experts and pundits alike are trying to make sense of a region and its people, whose history, character, and religion have long been viewed as the mysterious other. Matthew F. Jacobs argues that the discursive “contours” of our debate today evolved between the end of World War I and the late 1960s, when an “informal transnational network of professional specialists” from academia, the business world, government, and the media tried to “imagine” and interpret the complexities of the Middle East to American audiences (239, 6). Drawing heavily on the language of postmodernism, Jacobs attempts to “understand the intellectual environment within which debates about the nature and direction of U.S.-Middle East relations took place” (10).
Though his methodological approach is useful in outlining the “contours” of the debate, his “informal transnational network” proves too loose, too informal, and too short-lived to provide a cohesive model for understanding the construction of American foreign policy toward the Middle East.

Jacobs explains that the period from 1918 until World War II lacked policy specialists and primarily consisted of Orientalists with a focus on the ancient Near East or experts of Protestant missionary background, who were imbued with a desire “to transform the Orient in both sacred and secular terms” (15). Although these influences continued to inform later network specialists, Jacobs, by his own admission, acknowledges that there were “no clear guidelines for determining membership” (6). The individuals themselves never spoke of such a network; some did not even know each other, and others passionately disagreed with one another.

It was only during World War II that the focus would shift to the contemporary Middle East, and not until the Cold War that an attempt at the “institutionalization of knowledge” took place with “the creation of the academic field of Middle Eastern Studies, the expansion of U.S. government interests in the region, and the emergence of organizations like the Council on Foreign Relations and the Middle East Institute” (49). And only then did the experts of this informal transnational network wield their greatest influence as policymakers from the late 1950s through the mid-1960s by employing social science-based modernization theories to transform the Middle East. The author’s archival research comes to bear most in his discussion of the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations’ dealings with Arab nationalism. Students of American Mideast policy will find the connections between experts in academia, business, and government more convincing.

Though the book’s title, “Imagining the Middle East,” is reflected in the evolutionary tale of this informal transnational network, it is the subtitle of “Building an American Foreign Policy, 1918–1967” that promises too much. The very complexity of the framework renders the connection between policy formation and policy construction most difficult. Jacobs’s methodological approach becomes convincing only when said experts functioned as policymakers and their reports and recommendations resulted in American foreign policy actions. Students of American Mideast policy prior to World War II might find Michael Oren’s *Power, Faith, and Fantasy* methodologically and thematically more cohesive. In fact, the limitations of Jacobs’s loose informal network approach are particularly apparent in the author’s discussion of the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Experts and groups outside the informal network defined the parameters
of the debate over a Jewish state, and State Department officials, who were central
to delineating Mideast policy throughout most of the period under study, were
trumped by presidential prerogative. Moreover, it was the 1967 Arab-Israeli War
that ultimately led to the demise of this relatively short-lived network and gave
way to a politically and ideologically much more polarized community of experts
that continues to this day.

Concordia College
Sonja Schoepf Wentling

(Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011. Pp. xii, 313. $90.00.)

Although there has been a good deal written about the liberation struggle in
Zimbabwe, ranging from academic studies of various aspects of the war to
biographies of the protagonists from the different armed forces, very little has
been written on the police and armed forces in the first half of the twentieth
century. Moreover, even less is known about African members of these services
during this period. Timothy Stapleton’s book is thus a welcome addition to the
rapidly growing historiography on Zimbabwe. The author provides an excellent
narrative of the participation of Africans in the colonial police and army, tracking
their patterns of recruitment, roles in the services, living conditions, forms of
entertainment, and struggles for recognition during the six decades covered by this
study.

Stapleton also provides a stimulating exploration of the motives of Africans
joining the colonial service, moving away from any one-dimensional functionalist
notions of the need for employment or the idea that these men, and much later
women, were simply stooges of the colonial regime. He provides important
insights into the fact that though material motives were a central factor for blacks
joining these forces, many were also driven by the promise of a brighter future
with more adventure and prestige. In this pursuit, such recruits were very much in
the mold of the emerging black middle class in colonial Zimbabwe during this
period, who also aspired and made demands for better treatment and more
selective recognition and often constructed their demands through the promise of
imperial citizenship. The hierarchies of the police and armed forces were a
reflection of the racial hierarchies in the broader colonial society, and, parallel to
the struggles of the emerging nationalist middle class in the country, the black
members of the services also demanded better treatment in their working and
living conditions. Yet, as Stapleton writes, it is surprising that more members of
the police and army did not join the nationalist movements from the 1950s to the
period of the liberation struggle, when the majority of blacks became more antagonistic to blacks in the colonial services. He explains this as resulting from a combination of their gradually improving salaries and status and their assimilation into the police and military structures with their strong traditions of loyalty, sacrifice, and identity.

Stapleton’s book is written in an easy prose that draws on a wealth of detailed archival research and secondary work. It also opens up the discussion on blacks in the police and army in ways that complement the broader critical Zimbabwean historiography that has emerged since the late 1990s. As Zimbabwe remains caught in the pains of a struggle to move beyond the grip of an authoritarian nationalist state embedded in the militarist ethos of the liberation war, this book is an important reminder of the different trajectories of police and military involvement by black Zimbabweans under colonial rule and the competing narratives of national belonging that emerged from these experiences.

Solidarity Peace Trust and Centre for Humanities Research,        Brian Raftopoulos
University of the Western Cape

THE AMERICAS


In this slim and engaging volume, the author challenges a basic assumption that many Americans embrace when they celebrate their nation’s origins: The Founding Fathers were all-knowing civil prophets who transcended the uninspired mundanities of the eighteenth century to create an exceptional nation. Instead, he urges readers to view the Founders in a different light, as flawed human beings who struggled to diagnose the problems their fledgling nation faced in the 1780s, fumbled about in search of workable political solutions to overcome these challenges, and often disagreed with one another in the process.

R. B. Bernstein demystifies Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and other Founders and recasts them as imperfect (and far more interesting) individuals in three ways. First, he shows readers that they were not timeless sages isolated from the world. Rather, they were products of a particular time and place who understood themselves as people on the periphery of empire, loyal English subjects, and sons of the Enlightenment. Second, he highlights how they often disagreed with one another and made mistakes, even as they took strides to build a lasting republican government. Many of them, for example,
found little common ground when it came to the role of religion in civic life. In other cases, the political system the Founders crafted did not always function as they had anticipated. When they designed the Electoral College, for example, they had little idea that the emergence of political parties in the 1790s could deadlock elections and plunge the nation into chaos. By stressing these divisions and miscalculations, Bernstein reminds readers that even such luminaries as Jefferson and Madison were not always sure about where the country was headed on the verge of a new century. Third, the author sheds light on the perils of relying on the Founders as a source of guidance in modern America. In particular, he points out the challenge that exists when judges and politicians try to glean the original intent of the Founders and rely on these insights to solve contemporary problems.

Scholars of the era of the American Revolution will find little surprising in this book. Bernstein traverses well-worn historical terrain and does not have much new to say about his familiar cast of characters. His story, however, is valuable for other reasons. For one thing, Bernstein is a winning writer with style to burn. His prose brings his characters to life and makes accessible his critical view of the Founders as real people with very human weaknesses. At the same time, the book is a great source for undergraduates in search of research topics. The author cites a rich trove of secondary works and includes a helpful historiographical essay that highlights some of the best literature in the field. In the end, Bernstein’s book may not change the world. But it may convince an audience of general readers and college students that their nation’s Founders were far more human than they may have imagined.

Skidmore College

Eric J. Morser


A large number of biographies of US Navy officers of the age of sail have recently seen publication. Gordon S. Brown has now written the life of one of the more obscure figures in the navy’s early history. His biography of Thomas Tingey is, as Brown notes, also a history of the Washington Navy Yard, which Tingey commanded for the greater part of his career (vii). Even though several of the most prominent US officers of the age held command of naval yards (William Bainbridge, Isaac Hull, and Charles Stewart among them), only Tingey made shore command his career. Tingey never fought a sea battle, despite commanding the ship Ganges during the Quasi-War with France, and ended up burning much of the Washington Navy Yard during the War of 1812 as British
forces approached. That his life still reads so engagingly is a testament to Brown’s talent as a writer and historian. Based almost exclusively on primary sources, the book offers a valuable glimpse at the shore establishment of the US Navy between 1800 and 1829.

Brown outlines Tingey’s life chronologically, but wherever necessary he moves away from that narrow frame, such as when he gives readers a quick appraisal of Tingey’s work with various secretaries of the navy or of his disputes with the yard surgeon (57–59, 82–83). The Tingeys’ family life and Tingey’s own business relations, running parallel to his navy career, get nearly as much attention as the business of the navy yard—as indeed they did for Tingey himself. Thus, we discover as much about the details of fitting out the navy’s ships and establishing the navy’s shore facilities as we find out about the social connectedness of the Tingeys in Washington and Philadelphia and about Thomas Tingey’s character—modest, careful, and, above all, unambitious.

Tingey’s life and career were, as Brown writes about the commandant’s service at a court of inquiry, “apparently unexceptional” (162). His two moments of fame, refusing a British ship the right to muster his crew by claiming that he needed no protections (letters certifying sailors’ security from impressment) but the US flag and his decision to burn the Washington Navy Yard, are discussed by Brown with admirable reticence (29). He devotes just two pages to the British attack on the yard and does not deny that with its destruction “Tingey’s role in the war effort, in effect, was all but ended” (133).

Readers interested in the less glamorous side of early Republic naval history will find plenty of interest in Brown’s volume. It is precisely the fact that Tingey was an unexceptional officer—diligent, unambitious, able, neither a martinet nor a pushover—which makes the biography such an interesting read. It usefully complements Linda Maloney’s study of Isaac Hull, himself commandant of Charlestown Navy Yard as well as the Portsmouth station. They shared the same problems with suppliers and contractors, but their fundamentally different personalities and aims in the service made for different outcomes, and, of course, Hull’s service at sea differed very much from Tingey’s.

Tingey’s life saw no scandals, unlike James Barron; no action, unlike Isaac Hull; no duels, unlike William Bainbridge; no glamour, unlike Stephen Decatur; no victories, unlike Thomas Truxtun; and he was not a “father” of the navy, unlike John Barry. Gordon Brown has nonetheless managed to write a highly informative and engaging biography: high praise indeed for both author and subject.

Johannes-Gutenberg-University, Mainz, Germany

Tim Lanzendörfer

The Mexican Revolution [1910–1920] was a complex civil war during which competing factions fought for political power and social change. It also produced leaders, such as Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, who became heroes within popular culture and the official historical memory. Jürgen Buchenau focuses on one of these heroes—General Alvaro Obregón—and argues that his “military genius and political acumen always put him on the winning side” of conflicts (xi). The author successfully supports his argument while also pointing out Obregón’s flaws and excessive ambition, which led to his assassination in 1928.

The author offers a broad overview of Obregón’s life, and he relies on a variety of primary sources from archives in Mexico and the United States. Buchenau focuses on Obregón’s development as a caudillo, a charismatic strongman who ruled through systems of patronage and control of the military. Caudillos dominated politics in Latin America throughout the nineteenth century, and Obregón acted as the last of these strongmen in Mexico. The general built personal and economic relationships based on convenience, and he exploited his origins as a poor farmer to gain popularity. He was a natural military commander despite no formal training, and he quickly ascended to the rank of general during the Mexican Revolution. Obregón also became prominent in national politics as a negotiator during the Constitutional Convention of 1917. When the military phase of the revolution ended in 1920, Obregón was the favorite presidential candidate, and he served as president from 1920–1924 and again in 1928.

Buchenau devotes the second half of his study to this period and Obregón’s rule as the “last caudillo.” The author demonstrates that the new president rose to power through charisma and political skill; once in power, he became complicit in political assassinations and massacres in order to maintain control over the fragile nation. Herein lies the strength of Buchenau’s study. He describes how the Mexican government worked to institutionalize the revolution through what became the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). Buchenau then contrasts the party’s promises of social reform with the realities of personal ambition, rebellion, and murder among Mexico’s leaders. Obregón acted as an authoritarian ruler in order to maintain political stability, ease tense diplomatic relations with the United States, and deal with pressure from the business, agrarian, and labor sectors in Mexico. In spite of his flaws, Obregón constantly expressed his patriotism, and he became memorialized as a martyr after his assassination.
This work was not intended to be a complex study of Obregón’s life, and it was written for undergraduate students and a broader audience unfamiliar with the Mexican Revolution. Buchenau commits some minor factual errors (such as referring to journalist James Creelman as “James Pearson”), but, overall, he presents a solid introduction to one of the important figures of twentieth-century Mexico.

University of Texas at El Paso
Nancy Aguirre


How was the middle ground forgotten? In 1991 Richard White helped spark a revolution in the historiography of early America by chronicling the “world of common meaning” shared by American Indians and Europeans in the eighteenth-century Great Lakes region. In Winning the West with Words, James Joseph Buss ably explains how this history of coexistence has come to be neglected for so long. He focuses on the states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, where the US Army forced most (but not all) of the indigenous population west of the Mississippi during the 1830s and 1840s. As Indian removal proceeded before their eyes, white midwesterners increasingly erased the reality—and even the possibility—of an intercultural middle ground from their stories about the region’s past. In its place, they offered a now familiar tale of primitive natives who faded away in the face of advancing white civilization. The disappearance of the “savage” opened the Midwest to the “pioneer,” a mythic figure who became an American icon at about the same time that real settlers stopped being a thorn in the government’s side. This new “place-story” served first to rationalize the policy of forced dispossession and later to absolve the heroic pioneer of any responsibility for it (8).

Similar (mis)representations of conquest have received considerable attention from historians and cultural critics, most notably Richard Slotkin and Patricia Limerick. But Buss’s work breaks new ground in important respects. Above all his geographic and chronological focus permits an unusually rich and detailed


analysis of the social, political, and commercial context in which these representations emerged. The stories that lower midwesterners told about their region’s past would contribute significantly to America’s national mythology, but they also reflected the needs and concerns of particular people in a specific time and place. Petitions demanding preemption rights for hardworking “squatters” contributed to the emerging image of the “pioneer” but were actually the work of land speculators angling for political favors. A British artist’s paintings of Indians increasingly elided their frequent interactions with whites because his customers preferred to see their soon-to-be-removed neighbors as fundamentally alien. The middle ground faded from historical memory in part because the images of the vanishing Indian and sturdy pioneer proved politically useful and commercially profitable.

Buss’s argument about the region’s historical amnesia is persuasive and compelling. Some of the book’s sections are less effective, however. For example, though he ably describes the efforts of Ohio Wyandots to fend off removal, he fails to convince this reader that they did so by using “the language of settlement” (95). The Wyandots’ efforts centered more on the strategic conversion to Christianity, which is not quite the same thing. Nonetheless, Buss’s book is an important contribution to both the study of the American Midwest and the burgeoning field of historical memory.

University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point

Rob Harper


In this new work, the author examines popular-culture representations of the American South through radio, film, literature, and music from the late nineteenth century through World War II. Karen L. Cox discusses the more familiar representations of the South’s antebellum past like the mammy, the belle, and the chivalrous planter and incorporates the development of stereotypes like the hillbilly. She also explores the significance of black emigration from the South as one influence on the spread of these images.

Cox contends that the principal suppliers and distributors of these cultural images were urban non-Southerners responding to mainly white consumers’ apprehensions about Northern and Midwestern urbanization. Cox argues that this clientele looked to the South as a stagnant region devoted to bucolic ways of life and approached its idyllic standard as a form of escapism. Southerners later
appropriated these images as part of a larger culture of reconciliation and a tourist trade capitalizing on an Old South heritage.

The author mainly examines these issues through the interchanges of white Americans but does mention how African Americans “dreamed” of Dixie not only through the perceptions of white agents like Irving Berlin but also through producers like author Paul Laurence Dunbar. Cox ventures to show some complexity in how African Americans responded to, as well as incorporated, problematic representations, yet the text would have benefited from a more careful look at how class and career aspirations within those populations informed their positions as popular-culture actors and consumers. In a similar vein, the author briefly mentions how one white minstrel performer “won praise from African American audiences for her dialect” without addressing the potential psychosocial issues at the root of African American responses to Jim Crow minstrelsy (66).

The corporate drive to satisfy a consumership heavily reliant on perceptions of Southern nostalgia sets the framework for Dreaming of Dixie, yet one who expects to uncover a thorough analysis of how and why non-Southerners “dreamed” of Dixie will be met with a more comprehensive examination of how diverse entities participated in the process of marketing the South. Cox’s work would have been more appropriately titled “Selling Dixie,” as the supportive evidence for imagining the South is not as ubiquitous as that for marketing the South.

One of Cox’s greatest contributions is that she amply covers diverse forms of media to set the stage for how Southerners ultimately benefited from the perpetuation of the Lost Cause myth, generated by such popular films as Gone with the Wind, that encouraged Americans to spend their tourism dollars. Cox shows that one consequence was the development of railways, highways, and other roads—a timely analysis as more academic attention is being paid to historical tourism in the South.

Specialists and general readers alike will find this text an invaluable analysis of popular-culture representations of the South and a welcome introduction to a paradox of images of the South as both a refuge from modernity and spearhead of Southern urbanization.

University of Mississippi

Jodi Skipper


As a veteran, scholar, and accomplished writer, George C. Daughan understands naval history on a level far beyond the roaring cannons and slashing cutlasses of
tactical engagements. Though this volume holds plenty of fire and fury, its true strength is the astute meshing of politics, national and international, and the campaigns ashore that underlay and frequently determined activities afloat.

Daughan focuses on President James Madison and the political strife endemic to the United States since the 1790s. Though Madison’s Republican Party held power in Washington, Federalists remained strong in New England. Given a cause to rally the people, a resurgent Federalist Party could have seen victory in the 1812 elections. Causes existed in plenty, notably maritime ones: British interference with the right of free trade, seizure of American ships (by the hundreds), and impressment of American seamen (by the thousands). To retain political power, Madison saw little option to restore the nation’s ragged sovereignty except to declare war on Great Britain.

Madison had a plan: capture Canada as a bargaining chip while Napoleon, at the height of his power, distracted the British. Unfortunately, as Daughan emphasizes, Madison distrusted a professional military as much as he did a Federalist. Thus any invasion depended heavily on a barely trained and inexperienced militia led by officers of uncertain quality. As for the US Navy, its highly professional but miniscule force found itself ignored in discussions of strategy (much less budget allocations). Predictably, the invasions of Canada failed miserably. Worse, Napoleon soon fell from power. But surprisingly, the US Navy repeatedly embarrassed the gargantuan Royal Navy. In doing so, it may well have saved the president, the Republican Party, and the United States.

Solid research and superb writing characterize Daughan’s retelling of the two dozen or so key engagements fought between British and American ships. His understanding of American officers and men—and the Republican values that shaped them—is masterful and introduces a motivational element often missing from similar narrations. In truth, Daughan’s interpretations may well be the key to understanding American naval victories, including the fleet actions on Lakes Erie and Champlain that stymied British invasions. As Daughan asserts, the early frigate victories assumed tremendous political importance as they shattered the myth of British naval invincibility earned during that nation’s extended wars with France. Without this fine effort by the navy, respect for American sovereignty and rapprochement with Great Britain may not have occurred.

Several useful maps, a sail plan of a warship, and a glossary of naval terms complement Daughan’s lovely narrative. If there is a weakness in the book, it is the failure to emphasize the efforts of the private navy; for every British merchantman taken by a naval vessel, as many as eight or nine fell to privateers. However, this is a story of the public navy, and Daughan at least gives some credit where
credit is due. This reviewer strongly recommends 1812: The Navy’s War to scholars and general readers alike.

East Carolina University

Wade G. Dudley


Mexican cultural history has developed a substantive consideration of how the modern nation-state came into formation during the regime of Porfirio Díaz [1876–1911]. Matthew D. Esposito’s study is a fine example of the benefits gained from this trend. His focus on funerals and festivals provides clear empirical evidence for understanding the dynamics of hegemony during the age of Porfirio Díaz, especially how elite agendas became societal common sense. The book is a valuable contribution to Mexican history and general attempts at understanding cultural politics.

Esposito’s work is firmly grounded in primary sources. He makes extensive use of newspapers while also anchoring analysis in archival documents. Esposito leverages the pioneering work of earlier cultural historians to advance his original argument. He engages theoretical material but avoids jargon and long detours into the abyss of theory. Esposito retains a tightly focused text that is nicely written and easy to follow. The text is well suited for advanced undergraduate courses, significant enough for graduate students, necessary for specialists, and thematically substantive for non-Mexican specialists interested in cultural politics.

The book’s central question concerns the place of cultural politics in the construction of the modern Mexican nation-state. This historical problem is one of the core questions facing nineteenth-century Mexican historians. Previous interpretations have focused on the authoritarian politics of Díaz and how they combined with foreign investment to bring political stability to Mexico. Though not necessarily departing from this traditional argument, Esposito invites us to consider the actual relations of power within the authoritarian regime—especially how legitimacy was established and maintained, a challenging historical problem considering the longevity of Díaz’s reign. Esposito approaches the central question by unpacking the political significance of the cultural meanings of state-sponsored funerals and festivals. This unpacking happens through five core chapters in which Esposito presents detailed evidence. Not surprisingly, he maintains that funerals and festivals played a critical role in the emergence of the modern nation-state during the time of Díaz. They provided important civics lessons for
the popular classes; they shifted power from the church to the state; they allowed Díaz to neutralize compromising historical memories of Mexico’s divisive past; and funerals and festivals were important narrative frames in the formation of the modern nation-state’s imagined community.

Some readers might think Esposito overplays his hand, suggesting that funerals and festivals do not constitute the core factor in the construction of modern nation-states. This objection is largely an issue of interpretation and acceptance of cultural history’s approach to political questions. Others might assert that the author projects events and trends in Mexico City onto the entire nation without balanced empirical consideration of what transpired in the provinces. This objection is valid, but the flaw is a common one in Mexican history. Esposito offers a convincing argument, one that advances our understanding of a complicated and important historical period.

DePauw University

Glen David Kuecker


Every biographer faces the Herculean task of capturing the essence of his or her subject while offering a critical analysis of the subject’s life. Carol Faulkner has met this challenge with aplomb. Her engaging and thoroughly researched history of the life of Lucretia Mott provides readers with a new understanding of this notable abolitionist and women’s rights advocate. Faulkner makes clear to the reader that her use of the term “heresy” was one that Mott embraced as she navigated the electric stage of nineteenth-century reform movements. Rather than examine Mott through one particular lens of her public career, Faulkner offers a deeper understanding of what many, after reading this work, would consider a complex figure. The author contends that Mott refused to shy away from controversy due to her indefatigable commitment to her principles, leaving her embroiled in the divisions and controversies surrounding the fight for gender and racial equity. Faulkner concludes that Mott “was a committed activist, not a gentle Quaker,” who wore the label of heretic as a badge of honor (116).

Faulkner’s chronological organization of her work reveals that, throughout the course of Mott’s life, her subject shaped and was shaped by her life events. Beginning with her upbringing on Nantucket Island, Mott gained inspiration for her devotion to liberty and justice through the women left to care for the busi-
nesses of absent husbands drawn away by their maritime interests. Her education at Nine Partners, alongside her immersion in the Quaker tradition, instilled a sense of independence and inspired her to seek a higher calling as a teacher. Although given educational opportunities equal to men, her pay as a teacher revealed the imbedded inequities informed by nineteenth-century gender prescriptions that valued the work of men over women. Yet there she met her future husband James, who became her life-long companion and intellectual partner. Faulkner likewise explores the early influences of the schism within the Quaker meetings over female ministry and the inspiration Mott garnered from the radical work of Mary Wollstonecraft and Fanny Wright.

Faulkner dedicates the remainder of her analysis to the activist career of Mott. William Lloyd Garrison’s call for immediate abolition of slavery captivated Mott and radicalized her antislavery stance. As a result, she became instrumental in founding the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society, an organization that would serve as a crucial tool in the abolitionist movement and which thrust Mott into the public light. From the violence surrounding Pennsylvania Hall and its eventual burning by a mob to the public debates over the role of female abolitionists, Mott refused to demur from the potential label of heretic. Yet, as most historians credit Mott to the nascent women’s rights movement, Faulkner posits that the skilled activist weighed both racial and gender equity throughout her lifetime of activism.

Rooted in meticulous primary research and balanced with lively prose, Faulkner offers an innovative history of a pivotal figure in American history. The attention to the nuances of the Quaker narrative, abolitionist movement, and push for women’s rights makes this study essential to the understanding of the cause and the origins of the spirit of reform that swept the nation.

Birmingham-Southern College

Victoria E. Ott


Francisco Vázquez de Coronado began his exploration of Tierra Nueva on New Spain’s far northern frontier in 1540. Accompanied by more than a thousand Indian “allies” and African and Indian slaves, Coronado and his 375 Spanish followers searched for God (Catholic converts), glory (higher social status), and gold (although silver would do). Parts of the expedition traveled as far west as the Grand Canyon, as far east as the current state of Kansas, as far north in
New Mexico as Taos Pueblo, and as far south as today’s town of Truth or Consequences, an appropriate name for Coronado’s entire entrada. Frustrated by his lack of success in finding God, glory, or gold, Coronado retreated to New Spain in 1542, humiliated, disillusioned, and defeated. Exhausted by excessive Spanish demands and frequent wars, the Pueblo Indians were glad to see the invaders go.

Individually and together, Richard Flint and Shirley Cushing Flint have written or edited six previous books on Coronado’s failed expedition. Indeed, the editors have mined the Coronado expedition with far greater success than Coronado ever experienced in mining for wealth, souls, or social status on the northern frontier. In addition to their own extensive research and writing, the editors have encouraged fellow historians and anthropologists to develop their multidisciplinary interests in the Coronado expedition in two earlier anthologies, published in 1997 and 2003. Their newest volume compiles what the editors describe as an “explosion of knowledge” regarding Coronado and his expedition over the last decade alone (1).

The current book is divided into three parts: people, places, and portrayals. In the section regarding the people of the expedition, Shirley Cushing Flint describes the social origins of seven sobresalientes, or men of high status and authority, who served as Coronado’s top advisors. The book’s largest section, on places, considers Coronado’s multiple routes as he crisscrossed the vast northern frontier. After decades of tracing these paths, the editors conclude, “We are closing in on definitive delineation of the Coronado expedition’s route” (453). The book’s third section, on portrayals, deals with the expedition’s image in fiction, Pueblo folklore, and modern paintings. Included is a description of Douglas Johnson’s enormous project depicting no less than forty-nine pivotal scenes of the expedition. By March 2011 Johnson had completed twenty-six paintings, each “rich with detail” and historically accurate, thanks to the editors’ collaboration (449).

With the anticipated completion of Johnson’s paintings and the Flints’ promised accompanying narrative, readers are assured that The Latest Word from 1540 is not the last word on the Coronado expedition. Scholars, students, and general readers should be grateful to the Flints for their continued success in discovering new sources and offering new interpretations of the longest, largest, and most extensive exploration of the northern frontier in Spanish history.
This book is a worthy wedge of World War II scholarship (including appendix, notes, acknowledgments, and index). It is a well-considered and insightful exploration into the tangled web of FDR’s wartime leadership. The joint venture by Burton and Anita Folsom seeks to unravel the enigma long attached to FDR.

In his helpful introduction, M. Stanton Evans underscores, highlights, and applauds this contribution to the work of discovery presently pursued in this new era of FDR historiography. Under cover of war, FDR expanded the dominion of government and concentrated awesome control in the hands of the presidency at home and abroad. This trend, begun in the days of the New Deal, accelerated exponentially in the war emergency. FDR used the war crisis to put the presidency on steroids.

The authors are highly critical of Franklin Delano Roosevelt regarding foreign policy and military planning. This is particularly so with respect to the pregame days before Pearl Harbor and endgame strategies at Teheran and Yalta. FDR is indicted for having “squandered billions of dollars . . . in the eight years leading up to Pearl Harbor” without providing adequate military preparation. Blame for the disaster at Pearl Harbor is leveled upon “many heads,” yet FDR is exonerated for that standard censure by the backdoor-to-war historical school. The Folsoms say flatly, “he did not plan or desire the devastation at Pearl Harbor on December 7” (97). Clearly, once the war came to America’s doorstep, FDR pivoted from his earlier focus on domestic concerns in order to win the war.

This work is not an intellectual ambush. In fact, FDR is credited with an uncanny recognition of the vital need to become the arsenal of democracy and “work with big business to arm the United States.” In joining hands with American business to defeat the Third Reich there would be mutual rewards—“the capitalists would win profits, FDR would win votes, and America would win the war” (5).

FDR Goes to War is a reasonably balanced work of serious scholarship. Formation of a partnership with big business to win the war is celebrated. Criticism of FDR is concentrated on examples of incompetence, economic extravagance, political-diplomatic miscalculation, and shortsighted and unnecessary repression of civil liberties. Scholarship and the passing years have exposed a translucent irony at the core of FDR’s presidential watch. The mantle of world
leader, liberator, and savior was placed upon this global “Soldier of Freedom.” Yet, here at home, the president not only tolerated bigotry and intolerance but practiced it on a massive scale.

FDR did what a commander in chief is supposed to do. He won the war. His diplomacy permitted an Iron Curtain to descend upon Europe in the aftermath of war. Consequently, whole nations and entire peoples suffered decades of ruthless repression. This was the price of victory FDR was willing to pay to benefit those who lived on the free side of the curtain.

There are many fascinating sidebars such as the development and mass production of radar, penicillin, and the wheeled landing craft used at Normandy called the “duck.” Important economic questions are discussed, including the American addiction to soaring national debt.

FDR Goes to War will spark controversy. It serves as a corrective to previous genuflections to FDR in the familiar hagiography passed on by sympathetic court historians. It is well worth the attention of a new generation.

Metropolitan State University of Denver

Thomas J. McInerney

From the end of the Civil War until the end of Reconstruction, the Republican Party had political control over the South, built with a combination of former slaves, Republicans moving in from the North, and Southern whites who supported the Republican economic agenda. Much of the white support fell away as a result of economic turmoil in the mid-1870s and the end of Reconstruction in 1877. The Republican Party spent the next century clawing its way back to political dominance. In between those dates, Republican presidents visited the South, with a slim chance of winning electoral votes, to escape the Washington winters or as a display of national unity, but never to call for greater rights for those who remained loyal to the Republican Party: African Americans.

Edward O. Frantz examines the impact of the Republican presidents who went to the South from 1877 to 1933 in a solidly researched, well-written volume. Frantz begins with Rutherford B. Hayes, who completed the removal of federal troops from the South, effectively ending Reconstruction and returning state governments to the control of white Southerners. As Frantz shows, the trips to the South reflected the changing Southern view on race. When Hayes went south in 1877, the receptions were integrated, reflecting the Republican hopes for a new
coalition, but at the turn of the century when McKinley came, the South was under Jim Crow and the crowds were segregated, reflecting a new reality in the region. The trips south, occurring over more than half a century, show clearly the changing goals of the Republican Party, the condition of African Americans in the South, and the views of white Southerners.

Hayes came seeking to salvage what remained of the Republican Party following the return of the Democrats to power in 1877. William Howard Taft came looking for support from the remaining Republicans in his bid for renomination in 1912. Finally, Herbert Hoover, the first Republican with real hope of breaking the Democratic hold, campaigned in the South in 1928. He took six Southern states that year, although it probably had more to do with his Democratic opponent, Al Smith, being Catholic and anti-Prohibition than with support for the Republicans. But by the time he came back, with the Great Depression underway, it was to try to salvage the gains the Republicans had made.

Despite the best efforts of the Republican presidents, Frantz shows that they were left with little to show for their efforts. The number of Republican congressmen in the South peaked at seventeen in the 1928 election, but four years later was down to two. It would take a totally new coalition—without African Americans—starting in the 1950s to make the Republicans dominant in the South once again.

Frantz’s book illuminates well a subject that has been long neglected, filling the historical gap in the history of the Republican Party in the South.

University of Central Florida

James C. Clark


The author examines the fraternal and social lives of Union Civil War veterans in this new study. She posits the “Won Cause,” the memory of Union veterans, against the “Lost Cause” ideology popularized in Edward A. Pollard’s The Lost Cause [1867]. “Lost Cause” ideologues stressed Confederate heroism and sacrifice, justified secession as an assertion of states’ rights, and explained defeat as the result of Northern industrial superiority. Adherents of the “Won Cause” defined the war as a redemptive triumph of liberty and union over slavery and secession, a “necessary milestone on the road to fulfilling American national destiny” (165).

Barbara A. Gannon studies the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), established in 1866, in order to contextualize the “Won Cause” in Civil War-era
historical memory. In addition to many newspapers, she mined unpublished GAR descriptive and minute books, registers, rosters, and the organization’s national and state records, as well as records of its auxiliaries, the Woman’s Relief Corps and the Ladies of the GAR. Gannon failed to consult the AME Christian Recorder—a source that would have assisted her in tracking the activities of GAR posts in black communities nationwide.

Nevertheless, she documents more than 200 African American GAR posts in twenty-five states and the District of Columbia and over 460 integrated GAR posts in twenty states, the Dakota Territory, and Ontario, Canada. Though race-based discrimination occurred within the GAR (individual posts could reject blacks for membership), the politically powerful patriotic and social welfare national organization was interracial. Founding members of each GAR post determined its racial composition. Gannon writes, “The prewar social structure of states, slave or free, and the disparate nature of veterans’ Civil War experiences explain why some states had more integrated posts than others” (85). Posts in small towns typically numbered twenty to thirty members; those in larger cities had hundreds of members. Most all-black posts appeared in urban areas where large numbers of US Colored Troops veterans resided. All-black units did not necessarily reflect white racism and segregation but rather “the African American community’s enthusiasm for these groups” (36–37).

Gannon’s analysis of Union veterans’ memory of the war adds to previous scholarship. Most white GAR members charged the Confederates with treason, rejected the idea of postwar reconciliation, but did little to challenge Jim Crow laws and practices. They welcomed black veterans as fraternal comrades but not necessarily as their social or political equals. Black GAR members considered the war as a struggle for black freedom, participating in Memorial and Emancipation Day and Fifteenth Amendment commemorations. All-black GAR posts, according to Gannon, served the social needs of their communities “and as part of a broader agenda: to challenge the notion of an all-white Civil War” (40).

Gannon underscores the importance of the GAR as an interracial organization during the racially tense era of Jim Crow, one that provided African Americans important degrees of equality and opportunity during the nadir of race relations in American history. She writes, “It was GAR members’ memory of their wartime suffering and the reality of their postwar agony that created the interracial bond between black and white veterans” (6–7).

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

John David Smith
Historians have long understood that there were two American Revolutions, the triumphant one that culminated in political independence for the thirteen British mainland colonies and the far less successful campaign waged for human freedom. Alan Gilbert’s contribution is to demonstrate how the second revolution could have sustained and even hastened the first. Given the large number of Africans and African Americans in the colonies, together with a sizeable percentage of whites who remained loyal to Britain, the November 1775 decision by General George Washington and the Continental Congress to cease the enlistment of slaves temporarily handed the military advantage to the Crown.

Washington quickly came to see the folly of his decision, but the American refusal to adopt more dramatic proposals for black enlistment, such as that advanced by South Carolina’s John Laurens, led most black combatants to regard the British as the more dedicated to the cause of social equality. This saga has been told before, and specialists will be familiar with many of the stories recounted here, from that of Lord Dunmore’s regiment to Sir Guy Carleton’s principled refusal to return those soldiers and their families who took refuge within his lines. But armed with new research, Gilbert tells his sprawling story with grace and clarity as he follows his veterans onto the rocky shores of Nova Scotia and the rainy coast of Sierra Leone. As the white patriots they left behind crafted a Constitution that protected slavery and allowed for the importation of more captured Africans, the black refugees struggled to advance the cause of democracy and freedom in each place they settled. Although Gilbert’s wide-ranging account generally abandons the early Republic with the black emigrants, he gives the final word to one of Gabriel’s men, who during his trial compared himself to Washington and insisted that he too had risked his life for liberty.

An elegant and passionate writer, Gilbert pulls no punches, and not surprisingly a number of white founders attract his censure. Jefferson’s enmity toward the rebels in Saint-Domingue is here chronicled, as is James Madison’s curious theory that arming blacks would not cripple slavery on the grounds that “a freedman immediately loses all attachment and sympathy with his former fellowslaves” (172). Gilbert also carries on a polite but firm debate with other scholars in his discursive notes—usually Simon Schama but often Cassandra Pybus—which, unfortunately, are buried at the end of the volume.
Gilbert suggests that most accounts “dramatically understate the number of blacks on the American side,” which is usually placed around five thousand (105). Incomplete muster rolls and pay records, Gilbert concedes, make precision on this point difficult; some scholars simply identify soldiers as blacks if their surnames hint at their race. There is also the question of how to count enslaved manservants. Gilbert writes that William Lee “fought alongside” his master, George Washington, yet Lee’s only brush with death was due to an errant cannonball (108). Yet another of Washington’s slaves, the African renamed Harry Washington, fled with the British only to find himself battling autocratic imperial officials in Sierra Leone. Both men would have agreed with Gilbert that their second, unfinished revolution became part of an international struggle “devoted to incipient stirrings of democracy around the world” (207).

Le Moyne College

Douglas R. Egerton


In this slim biography of Emma Goldman, Vivian Gornick stresses her subject’s remarkable independent spirit. Gornick’s goals are to present “the force of [Goldman’s] extraordinary rebelliousness” and “to understand it in light of the existential drive behind radical politics” (4). Beginning with Goldman’s own temperament, Gornick analyzes the autonomous sensibility Goldman cultivated in politics. Gornick rightly emphasizes the similarity of Goldman’s politics to art—her passion for activism comparable to an artist’s gift. Taking the Haymarket riots, the Homestead strike, and the revolutions in Russia and Spain as anchors, Gornick presents Goldman’s personal and political journey in accessible terms that could be useful to readers new to the subject of Goldman or anarchism.

For readers already familiar with Goldman or anarchism, however, Gornick’s book offers less. Gornick oversimplifies both Goldman and anarchism, reducing both to psychological rebellion against authority and minimizing their equally important commitment to constructive, collective action. Class oppression and religious mystification were as unacceptable as state regimentation and social conformity for Goldman, who equally demanded individual self-expression and structural change. Stressing spirit at the expense of intellect, Gornick reintroduces the dualism between thinking and feeling that Goldman struggled to transcend.

Gornick baldly pronounces that “Emma Goldman was not a feminist” and “Emma Goldman was not a thinker” (75, 140). Neither of these assertions stands up to scrutiny. The first equates feminism entirely with struggles for legal reform,
such as suffrage, but feminism has always combined those who want a fairer share of the existing arrangements with those who want to create a different kind of society entirely. The second takes spirit to be the opposite of thought, when it is standard feminist theory to refuse this dyad and insist on thinking and feeling as mutually constitutive.

Gornick’s book suffers, it appears, from a lack of exploration of relevant material in the Emma Goldman Papers Project. For example, Gornick quotes J. Edgar Hoover as saying that Goldman was “the most dangerous woman in America” (29). Yet the famous memo from Hoover, readily available on the Project’s website, actually states that Goldman and Alexander Berkman were “the most dangerous anarchists in this country.” Gornick mislocates Goldman in relation to Nazism, claiming that Goldman overlooked Hitler in her fixation on Franco (137). Yet Goldman’s letters reveal considerable anxiety over anti-Semitism in France, the Ukraine, and the rest of Europe. Gornick’s oversight is unfortunate in a book in the Jewish Lives series, in which readers are understandably concerned about Goldman’s relation to fascism.

In sum, Gornick is successful in achieving her first aim, portraying Goldman’s rebellious spirit, but less so in her second, that of helping readers understand “the existential drive behind radical politics” (4). Gornick does not explore so much as she simply asserts: calling Goldman a “born refusenik” with a “timeless hunger for living life on a grand scale”; she pronounces her “born for” activism. Yet to understand the creation of a revolutionary life, we need more.

University of Hawai‘i

Kathy E. Ferguson


Seventy years after her suicide by drowning, the magisterial Virginia Woolf continues to fascinate readers around the globe. Her greatest novels, Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse, and The Waves, have even transcended the English-language canon; ever since the 1946 publication of Erich Auerbach’s literary-critical masterpiece, Mimesis, these works have raised her to the rank of Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare in world literature. But is there space for yet another study in the long line of books about Woolf’s troubled life?

Cultural historian Alexandra Harris demonstrates that the answer is a resounding yes. Her new Virginia Woolf is what today’s literary publishers, immersed in the cold realities of micromarketing, hopefully label a “crossover” biography—that is, a book designed to appeal both to scholars of cultural history and to
consumers of books on Amazon.com. The hope is well justified here; the accessibility of this study is grounded upon authentic research and suffused with a lovely literary sensibility.

Granted, early passages in Harris’s biography cover ground that is familiar from previous accounts of Woolf’s life; we witness the Victorian upbringing and the youth plagued by griefs—the untimely deaths of parents and a sibling, the emergence of mental illness, and the sexual abuse by a step-brother. But unlike other biographers, Harris does not cast a prurient eye on Woolf’s bipolar disorder or closeted bisexuality; she instead emphasizes Woolf’s psychic flowering amid the sexual, social, and artistic freedoms of her bohemian refuge, the Bloomsbury coterie. We read of Woolf’s sweet revenge for her gender-based denial of a university education through her intellectual camaraderie with Lytton Strachey, E. M. Forster, John Maynard Keynes, Katherine Mansfield, T. S. Eliot, and her husband, Leonard Woolf. In contrast to other Woolfian chroniclers, Harris chooses not to dwell on Woolf’s anger at the patriarchal repressions of English middle-class life but instead details her vivid aesthetic experiences; her ever-fresh forays in travel, intimacy, and free-thinking; and her social defiance—like that of Oscar Wilde’s—in the name of épater la bourgeoisie.

This account portrays a lighter, more energetic, more approachable Woolf than the tortured soul of some biographies. In passages like the following, her lust for life shines through: “Woolf’s diary was one of her ways of countering life’s transience. . . . She hated to think of ‘life allowed to waste like a tap left running’ ” (64). Harris’s book is not, however, a literary hagiography; we catch glimpses of Woolf’s snobbery, her anti-Semitism, her egotism, her constant jealousy, and her occasional spite. This biographer also offers unfamiliar and delightful quotidiania. She notes how Woolf’s great works purchased for their author her material comforts: “Mrs. Dalloway bought a bathroom at Monk’s House and two WCs. . . . To the Lighthouse bought a car” (110–111). And here is a taxi-cab exchange, recorded in Woolf’s diary, between herself and T. S. Eliot: “‘We’re not as good as Keats,’ Woolf said to him. . . . “Yes we are,” he replied” (72). Eliot was right, of course. Harris’s Virginia Woolf offers vivid evidence for the argument that, as a high Romantic modernist, Woolf will exhilarate generations of readers to come.

Ohio Wesleyan University

Martin Hipsky

This account of the Loyalists of the American Revolution focuses not on those who adhered to the cause of king and empire within the long revolutionary crisis itself but rather on that fragment of Loyalist America—sixty thousand free Loyalists of all races, with fifteen thousand slaves—exiled from the new Republic at war’s end. The author follows them to Britain; to the scene of their greatest importance in the eastern part of what is now Canada; to the Bahamas, where they more than doubled the population; to Jamaica; and to Sierra Leone, where they became an important part of the first colony of ex-slaves. The result is a solid, satisfying book, the first general account of the Loyalist diaspora ever to appear and a benchmark in the renaissance of Loyalist studies in the United States during the last generation.

Bringing coherence to a story told in contexts stretching from Niagara to western Africa is a challenge that Maya Jasanoff meets with great art. She highlights some striking parallels among several of the new settlements—discontent over unequal distribution of public bounty, a tumultuous process of political integration, ironic accusations of disloyalty. Most impressive is the way she unifies diverse stories by weaving into them the vicissitudes of a dozen notable characters and families—male, female, white, black, and Amerindian—who turned up in multiple exile settings. Readers dismayed to find the book opening with a Schama-like “cast” of such characters should read on. In its construction, Liberty’s Exiles is a splendid specimen of the historian’s craft.

In Jasanoff’s telling, the Loyalist dispersal of the 1780s and 1790s illustrates well the fluidity of settlement, patronage, and connection within the remaining British Empire. And, of course, it was the Loyalist migration to eastern Canada that determined that northern America would be home to two nations rather than monopolized by one. This much conceded, has the American diaspora wider significance?

Jasanoff makes two claims of note. She sees the Loyalists’ self-confidence in their continuing attachment to empire as giving them the strength to resist the new authoritarianism that London imposed on the empire in the wake of the American and French Revolutions. In the Canadian colonies, this loyal friction fostered the system of “responsible” self-government within a broader imperial sovereignty. In this sense, the Loyalist attachment to ordered liberty, defeated in the eighteenth century, was vindicated two generations later in British America. Then it was applied in several other colonial settings that would evolve into some of the world’s most successful liberal democracies.
More novel is the author’s contention that the pattern of paternalism and compensation that the imperial government displayed during and after the American crisis (support for civilian refugees, freedom for black slaves deserting rebel masters, financial compensation, and transport of freed blacks to the Sierra Leone experiment) became morally compelling precedents that underpinned the movement to abolish slavery. In Jasanoff’s hands, this thread of “clarified commitment” to humanitarian ideals seems plausible (12).

D. G. Bell


In this new study, the author argues that, during the antebellum period, American authors and editors played a key role in changing the perception of the gallows from a necessary tool of sober justice to a symbol of uncivilized barbarity. Paul Christian Jones shows that when authors utilized the image of the gallows to provoke horror in fiction or poetry, it echoed the appeals of reformers, who often used the monstrosity of the punishment as the centerpiece of their arguments.

Capital punishment was not abolished in the antebellum period, but the campaign against it produced impressive results. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the number of capital crimes was reduced, executions were taken out of the public square, and several states abandoned the death penalty. Jones connects these successes with the work of authors and editors, like John O’Sullivan and Walt Whitman, who supported the abolition of capital punishment and actively promoted literary works that criticized the gallows and expressed sympathy for convicted criminals. In tracing these arguments about sympathy, Against the Gallows presents a case for sentimentalism as a powerful force for social reform.

Historians like Louis Masur have written about the efforts to abolish capital punishment, and David Reynolds and many other scholars have written about the connection between literature and social reform; Jones goes beyond this scholarship to examine how literature did the “social work” of changing the cultural image of the gallows. Jones’s argument, however, is broader and more nuanced than simply an account of what was written by opponents of the death penalty. Jones accepts that many authors who utilized the image of the gallows did not write as social reformers. He shows, in fact, that some authors who portrayed the gallows in dark and gothic hues opposed the abolition of the death penalty. By
focusing on the effect of their imagery rather than their personal position on the issue of abolition, Jones makes a compelling case that their writing changed the way Americans saw the gallows.

The book draws mainly from the 1840s and 1850s and features close readings and analyses of how capital punishment and the gallows were portrayed in the pages of a variety of sources, ranging from articles and poems in newspapers—like O’Sullivan’s *Democratic Review* and Whitman’s *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*—to little-known American crime novels modeled on British “Newgate fiction” to the sentimental writing of women writers like E. D. E. N. Southworth. In the book’s final chapter, Jones explores how Herman Melville’s *Billy Budd*, though begun in the 1880s, reflects the concerns of earlier decades.

Jones provides a convincing argument that Americans changed how they thought about the gallows during the 1840s and 1850s. He also persuasively shows that this change was partly “a product of the concerted efforts of the editors, ministers, poets, and novelists who worked diligently to keep before the public eye this specter of the gallows as an image of injustice, tyranny, and bloodthirsty revenge” (33).

*Indiana University*  
Stephen D. Andrews


On November 7, 1811, soldiers under the command of Major General William Henry Harrison engaged warriors representing several Indian nations at Prophetstown in present-day northwestern Indiana. Traditionally viewed as an Indian defeat that dashed the hopes of the Shawnee brothers Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa to create a pan-Indian alliance and thwart the advance of white settlement, the battle of Tippecanoe advanced Harrison’s political ambitions and, indirectly, those of John Tyler too.

In *The Gods of Prophetstown*, Adam Jortner seeks to set the record straight. Employing a wide range of published and unpublished primary sources, Jortner argues that the efforts of the Shawnee Prophet and his older brother (Tecumseh was his brother’s sidekick—not the other way around) were not born of desperation at the prospect of inevitable defeat but constituted the opening salvo in a religious war—the Great Spirit against Providence—“with the vast expanse of the western frontier, a holy land, as the prize” (11). Tenskwatawa, Jortner argues, was a dedicated and sincere religious revolutionary who challenged not only
established theological ideals but the political structure and cohesion of several Eastern Woodland tribal communities. Although his theological precepts evolved as time passed, he was no charlatan (as many traditional sources claim), and his dream of establishing an Indian state very nearly succeeded.

The Shawnee Prophet’s primary antagonist—the “hero” of Tippecanoe—was William Henry Harrison. Jortner provides a very interesting (and decidedly negative) portrait of “Old Tippecanoe” and his ruthless tenure as Indiana’s territorial governor. Though ambitious, self-promoting, and, unlike Tenskwatawa, not terribly religious, Harrison’s dominance of Indiana politics steadily weakened as new settlers moved into the area and opponents managed to frustrate his ability to stack the territorial government and court system with favorites. By 1809 he recognized that his political survival depended on wringing lands from the Shawnees and other tribes of the Old Northwest, a “skill” that he had perfected during his long tenure as governor and diplomat.

Jortner’s brief discussion of the battle of Tippecanoe may disappoint military history aficionados, but the battle is not the book’s primary focus. Instead, the author provides readers with a beautifully written history that chronicles the parallel lives of two talented leaders with ambitious goals who were willing to risk their lives—and the lives of others—to achieve them. The battle of Tippecanoe, Jortner argues, was a disaster for both sides. Harrison needed a victory to buttress his perilous political situation, but his offensive was “ill-planned, costly, and militarily insignificant” (192). Although Tenskwatawa and his followers reoccupied Prophetstown within weeks of the battle, their retreat in the face of Harrison’s forces and the sight and smell of smoke rising from their settlement shook the confidence of some Indian allies and, perhaps more importantly, allowed Harrison to claim victory, both at the time and thirty years later during the 1840 election.

*The Gods of Prophetstown* is a marvelous book that could very well change the way that scholars have interpreted the battle of Tippecanoe and the ability of the Shawnee and their allies to achieve their goals. Jortner’s talents as a scholar and author are exceptional, and the appeal of this volume will undoubtedly be broad. This reviewer looks forward to reading his next book.

*University of Texas at Brownsville*  
Thomas A. Britten


This new biography of Patrick Henry will find a wide readership. Writing for a popular audience, Thomas S. Kidd provides a sketch of Henry’s life and an
overview of the revolutionary conflict with Great Britain. The Patrick Henry that emerges from its pages should be a darling of the Tea Party of the early twenty-first century. Stridently for state’s rights, Henry opposed the United States Constitution because he saw its oversized government as a threat to the liberty for which he had become so great a spokesman. Moreover, he advocated government support for Christian religion while encouraging the disestablishment of a single church. This appeal to the political Right is intentional: Kidd’s final words are, “in 1776, Patrick Henry’s ideals of liberty, religion, a moral society, small government, and local politics were essential principles upon which America was built” (254). Moreover, the reviewer’s copy of the book outlines the national marketing strategy, which includes using a “conservative radio campaign” to publicize the book.

Whatever the popular response to the book, many professional historians will be disappointed. The portrayal of both the Revolution and Patrick Henry is monodimensional. Ignoring divisions within American society and the idea that the Revolution was an Anglo-American civil war, Kidd writes, “The era summoned heroic personalities like his [Henry’s], men who were called to defend America’s liberties with political and moral fervor” (66). Similarly, Kidd implies on one page that there were hardly any Loyalists after Dunmore’s proclamation offering freedom to slaves and two pages later refers to the persistence of Loyalists in the Tidewater (110, 112). Kidd never entertains the possibility that Loyalists, and the African Americans attracted to the British, were also fighting heroically for their liberty.

There is little contingency in Kidd’s story. The break from Great Britain in his account was inevitable from the moment Henry spoke out against imperial regulation: “The struggle for independence, which had begun with Patrick Henry’s Stamp Act speech in Williamsburg in 1765, had been won sixteen years later, only a few miles to the east of the site of that famous oration, in the riverine lands of the Tidewater [Yorktown]” (161). Such an assertion ignores the fact that few British-Americans in 1765 thought that their protests were leading to independence and discards the complexity of the war that raged from 1775 to 1783 (not 1781).

If, as a professional historian with liberal politics, the reviewer finds the book unsatisfactory, perhaps he should take solace that he is not the intended audience. Indeed, despite the publicity campaign and the politics one detects in Kidd’s writing, the general public can learn some interesting lessons from this book. Recently, a young African American student at Patrick Henry High School in Minneapolis posted a message on his school’s website arguing that the school
should change its name because, as he discovered after reading Kidd’s book, Patrick Henry owned slaves. To Kidd’s credit, he is aware and is proud of this unintended impact of his biography of Patrick Henry.

University of Oklahoma

Paul A. Gilje


This new study is perhaps better described in its introduction as a “secret society history of the Civil War period” (ix). What Mark A. Lause has written is actually a brilliant study of the transnational forces and structures that framed the origins of the Civil War rather than a history of the shadowy recesses of the war itself. In the aftermath of the European revolutions of 1848–1849, political and social radicals from France, Germany, and England emigrated to the United States. Building on the organizational models provided by existing Masonic lodges, these émigrés and their American counterparts created a series of secretive associative groups aimed at disrupting elite power structures by fostering a sense of working-class solidarity and socioeconomic nationalism. Rarely overtly political, these organizations nonetheless provided intellectual, structural, and organizational support for activists seeking systemic changes to American society.

The dynamics of these groups diverged wildly amid the slavery debates of the 1850s. In the North, the collective known as the Universal Democratic Republicans (UDR) remained devoted to “socialism, free thought, and physical culture,” the pursuit of which included land reform and the elevation of all labor including enslaved Southern blacks (37). This focus on the sanctity, unity, and liberty of labor, coupled with the organization’s inclusion of several prominent radical abolitionists in its membership rolls, made the UDR and its affiliated organizations ripe for political organization. By the mid-1850s, its association with the Free Democratic Party would form the foundation of Republican Party chapters in several Northern states. Southern filibusterers and fire-eaters ignored the labor reform aspects of secret societies and instead saw utility in the goals of cultural and socioeconomic nationalism. The Knights of the Golden Circle (KGC), for example, the largest of the Southern organizations, sought to “liberate” the “uncivilized” regions of North America and the Caribbean by annexing Mexico and Cuba to a proposed Southern Confederacy. And though Lause downplays the scale of the KGC’s filibustering efforts, he rightly points out the psychological importance of the organization in policing contested regions of Southern states during the secession crisis and in infiltrating Northern states during the war itself.
Secret societies are, well, secretive. Hence, it is frustrating, albeit understandable, that Lause is forced to infer much of his argument by reading “beneath” the public pronouncements of society members, people that Lause freely admits were sometimes con artists. The genealogy linking Old World radicalism to New World labor reform and secession is convoluted, and without clear records the ideological and organizational connections are drawn as much from overlapping membership rolls as from any structural or operational linkages that would tie, say, the early UDR to the fledgling Republican Party. Nonetheless, this remains an important study of antebellum- and secession-era radicalism, politics, labor, and ideology.

Troy University

David Carlson


This new book opens with a provocative counterfactual question: would there have been an American Revolution without George Whitefield, the eloquent, itinerant, mid-eighteenth-century evangelical preacher? As Jerome Dean Mahaffey discloses at the outset, this proposition was advanced by Glenn Beck on the television host’s Founders’ Friday programs. “No Whitefield, no Revolution!” Beck enthused. Though some might regard this as an inauspicious beginning, it is not an unworthy topic for historical investigation. Whitefield’s contemporary influence on colonial British America was so immense that if one of his early trips between England and the colonies had resulted in shipwreck, American history would have likely charted a different passage. Making the case for a Whitefield-inspired American Revolution, Mahaffey delineates the major rhetorical inflection points in Whitefield’s career, including his legendary evocation of the “new birth,” which set the religious culture on an evangelical course; his later turn to a more genial relationship with fellow Protestants and a more vigorous anti-Catholicism; and, finally, Whitefield’s prerevolutionary critique of British imperial overreach in North America, which sealed the connection between his radical approach to religion and its radical implications for politics.

These are familiar historiographical waters for Mahaffey. The Accidental Revolutionary is actually a popularization and modest reorientation (via Beck’s hypothesis) of his Preaching Politics: The Religious Rhetoric of George Whitefield and the Founding of a New Nation [2007]. Mahaffey is at his best when tracing the impact of Whitefield’s tropes, such as the “new birth,” and the rhetorical templates that gave his religious and political arguments their distinctive form.
Curiously, *The Accidental Revolutionary* relies on the same presupposition that animated *Preaching Politics*, namely that Whitefield introduced British America to binary (“us” versus “them”) thinking, an allegedly new phenomenon that, in Mahaffey’s telling, cultivated protonationalism among colonial Americans. The argument is no more persuasive the second time around. Mahaffey would be on surer ground if he stuck to the specific binaries that Whitefield created—for example, between the saved and the unsaved—the new forms of inclusion and exclusion these categories generated, and their likely political effects.

A different form of dualism afflicts the concluding chapters. There, Mahaffey invokes deism for the first time and does so to suggest that it was the primary revolutionary alternative to New Light revivalism, and not much of one at that. This move elides the fact that theological rationalism had been encroaching on the dominion of revelation (and often without treading into outright deism) for nearly a century. The last chapters also discount the longer traditions of Protestant republicanism and their persistent opposition to ecclesiastical dominance, which liberally seeded anti-imperial resistance. Without such context, it is difficult to surmise whether there would have been an American Revolution in Whitefield’s absence or how much responsibility should be attributed to the broader evangelical movement. Nonetheless, with admirable consideration for nonacademic readers, Mahaffey’s *The Accidental Revolutionary* still manages to fortify Whitefield’s historical position as a preeminent eighteenth-century source of American religious and political inspiration.

*Bentley University*  
Chris Beneke

**Collision Course: Ronald Reagan, the Air Traffic Controllers, and the Strike that Changed America.** By Joseph A. McCartin. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. 375. $29.95.)

Historians have good reason to regard a seminal clash of labor and management three decades ago as a “switching point” in modern American history. In 1981 the Reagan administration fired nearly twelve thousand striking federal employees, each a member of a union, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO), at fierce odds with the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA). Reaganism and union militancy “in a sense . . . had been on a collision course for years,” and industrial relations, along with class mobility, class relations, politics, and labor unionism, have not been the same since the strike (9).

Since the “onset of an ominous new era in American labor relations,” a wounded labor movement remains hesitant to strike (300). Antiunion companies
copy the FAA’s successful use of striker replacements. Unorganized workers are frightened during union organizing campaigns by grim reminders of PATCO’s loss of jobs. Public sector unions remain on the defensive. And the Reagan triumph has helped define a modern-day conservatism that is cold to the cause of unionism—this is a “litmus test of Republican loyalty” (337).

Employing a refreshing reader-friendly style much like that of a novelist, labor historian Joseph A. McCartin meticulously draws on over one hundred interviews and mountains of widely scattered material. He reviews key reasons controllers unionized in 1961, including the harsh ways of the FAA, low pay, poor equipment, crippling constraints on the ability of controllers to bargain, and the feisty desire of younger ex-military controllers eager to “take on” comparably macho FAA managers. Likewise, he discusses key reasons why the FAA wanted to remain a nonunion workplace and strove fervently first to keep PATCO out and later to undo it when it got in.

Historians can learn how “the last dying embers” of the 1960s significantly colored strike events two decades later, how racism and sexism limited PATCO’s strength, how tight prestrike bonds promoted solidarity even while clouding reason, how divided labor was about supporting PATCO’s illegal militancy, how divided Reagan advisers were about remaining vindictive toward ex-strikers, and how very close the government came to losing the most costly strike of modern times. Especially noteworthy is a sensitive account of how and why the strike-breakers soon came themselves to unionize. Their unexpected effort remains a stinging indictment of the FAA style of management, a vindication of many of PATCO’s grievances, and far-reaching evidence of the need underlings can feel for countervailing power.

McCartin’s carefully modulated analysis would seem to support three major lessons. First, democratic organizations like PATCO need safeguards against capture by closed-minded zealots. Second, governmental agencies like the FAA need participatory, rather than authoritarian, ways of operating. And third, historians are needed to correct popular misunderstandings (e.g., Reagan, a former union president, did not set out to destroy PATCO, and the strikers did have some good reasons to expect victory).

In a second edition, McCartin might discuss the effort PATCO locals made to prevent strike vandalism by hothead members and the costly unsuccessful post-strike effort by experts to correct FAA ways. Until then, this outstanding book will do exceedingly well as a revealing, astute, and instructive work of history.

Drexel University

Arthur B. Shostak

There are many stories of travelers losing all of their worldly possessions to robbers while in transit between Veracruz and Mexico City during the three decades after Mexican independence in 1821. One such tale depicts unlucky stagecoach passengers arriving in the capital with only filthy newspapers covering their nakedness. Whatever the actual conditions, better or worse, the stories illuminate the continuing strong connections between the port and the interior metropolis. If the port on the Gulf of Mexico did not prosper, there was little chance for the nation’s economic development. But Veracruz was a dangerous place, for lethal diseases in the form of malaria and yellow fever rendered it unlivable for all but those who had built immunities. Europeans and North Americans had only a matter of days (perhaps weeks, if fortune smiled) to leave the sweltering city. Veracruz was dangerous, too, because it was the point of invasion for foreign powers, particularly Spain and France. These decades witnessed the landing of Spanish troops in 1829 and French forces in 1838–1839. The threat continued well into the century (the United States invaded in 1846, the French again in 1862). As a consequence, much of the city’s commerce transferred to Xalapa, which—oddly, it might seem—became an Atlantic seaport despite its location roughly sixty miles inland.

For Rachel A. Moore, Xalapa was a city with its connections and outlook focused outward to the Atlantic world, and this shaped its view of Mexico as a whole, particularly its relationship with the government in Mexico City. She maintains that Xalapa was a cosmopolitan city that welcomed foreigners and whose residents ardently acquired information from sources east and west. She contrasts Xalapa’s development with that of the neighboring rival city Orizaba, whose residents she concludes were far more provincial and inward looking. But it is not so much economics and politics that concern the author. At the heart of her project is “the historical geography of knowledge” (11). She explores the acquisition of information in the public sphere and documents how credibility functioned in a region pulled in two directions, toward central Mexico and the Atlantic.

The study of the process of Xalapa finding itself as it was pulled by its Atlantic interests and its need to determine its place in the larger nation amidst the conflict between centralists and federalists is, admittedly, a well-worn road. Moore, however, wanders onto some less well visited routes, including early-nineteenth-
century literacy, inns and taverns, reading rooms, and post offices. Moore identifies taverns as the main forum of ideas for Xalapans and maintains that this exchange was deeply affected by the input of Atlantic travelers passing through and stopping for food, drink, and lodging on the way to the interior. The post office was the primary means that more conservative Orizabans used to keep contact with the ideas discussed nationally.

This book is alternately fascinating and befuddling. There are very interesting bits and pieces of the intellectual life of two small cities, Xalapa and Orizaba, during the first part of the nineteenth century, but they are often only tenuously connected to the central theme. Chapters do not follow the map laid out in their first paragraphs. Conclusions do not follow easily from the evidence presented. The author, moreover, does not define her crucial term, the “Atlantic World.”

Rutgers University

Mark Wasserman


The slave family in the Old South has received a great deal of attention over the years, most recently in books by historians Brenda Stevenson, Larry Hudson, Wilma Dunaway, and Emily West. None of these studies, however, have offered a comparative analysis of the slave family structure in the non-cotton-producing regions of the South. This comparison of slave family life in grain-producing Fairfax County, Virginia; in rice-producing Georgetown District, South Carolina; and in sugar-milling St. James Parish, Louisiana, provides a unique perspective.

Marshaling a broad range of primary and secondary sources, Damian Alan Pargas tells how the size of farms and plantations, the work routines for those in bondage, the number of black people within each slaveholding household, the crops they planted and harvested, and the gender distribution within the slave population all had an impact on slave family life. The author admits that the three study areas represent unique settings compared with the cotton South, but by viewing the problem of slave family creation from this vantage point, one is able to examine the underlying economic forces that created unique environments for different family structures. Slaves who lived in Fairfax County, which experienced economic decline and increased hiring during the antebellum era, found it very difficult to find spouses on their small agricultural units and most often looked “abroad,” or to neighboring farms, for wives and husbands; slaves who lived in prospering Georgetown on huge rice plantations with sometimes hundreds of slaves often found wives and husbands on the same units; and black people living
on the sugar plantations of St. James Parish, with the arduous work days and large number of male slaves, were often unable to establish nuclear families. There were also other forces working against the unity of black families, including those rarely discussed by other scholars: the distribution of slaves after estate sales, long-term hiring, and even manumission, which forced those who were freed to leave family members behind in bondage.

This study is well conceived, well written, and well executed. More might have been said about the breakup of families during the domestic slave trade, the impact of runaways on the family structure, and slave longevity (the latter is mentioned concerning slaves in St. James Parish), but the author certainly achieves his objective of presenting “a broader view of the complex forces that shaped enslaved people’s family lives” (8).

University of North Carolina-Greensboro

Loren Schweninger


In an era when many Founding Fathers’ biographies congest bookstore shelves, could historians benefit from a new biography of Ethan Allen? With this work, the answer is yes, but with strong caveats. The book clearly aspires to be the next entry into the genre defined by David McCullough’s John Adams, attempting to reintroduce Allen to both a scholarly and a popular audience. Any student in a US history survey should be able to connect Allen to the capture of Fort Ticonderoga, but how many historians could say much about the rest of his career? To fill this lacuna, Willard Sterne Randall’s biography could serve a useful purpose, especially because of its use of New York, Canadian, and British sources. He portrays a charismatic individual who advocated for the common man, both in politics and religion. He led a self-appointed militia of these common men—the Green Mountain Boys—in contesting their right to lands in Vermont they had purchased under New Hampshire patents, while the land was simultaneously claimed by New York and its powerful landed gentry. In the process, Allen became wealthy as an avid land speculator himself. Gaining quick fame after Ticonderoga, Allen returned to military service, only to be captured outside Montreal later in 1775. The British held him prisoner for the next three years, ferrying him to England and back to America. Released in 1778, Allen penned an account of his captivity, which became a revolutionary-era best seller. Returning to Vermont, he supported Vermont’s actions as an independent republic while trying to shepherd it into the new United States, which finally occurred in 1791, two years after Allen’s death.
The book’s primary flaw appears in its subtitle: “His Life and Times.” Attempting to write a “life and times” biography meant bypassing the opportunity to write a tight, focused study of Allen’s life and experience during the Revolution. Instead, the result is an overly long book that repeatedly follows tangents unrelated to Allen’s life, on topics such as Anne Hutchinson, the Stamp Act protests, the Boston Tea Party, and the entire career of Benedict Arnold. As a result, Allen as the main character disappears for pages at a time. The book easily could have lost a third of its pages while still communicating the salient elements of Allen’s life and avoiding redundancies.

As a result of trying to be too wide-ranging, the book stumbles on some topics that deserved more attention, most particularly religion. Allen was a religious iconoclast, publishing in 1785 the deist work *Reason, the Only Oracle of Man*. Randall discusses the religious environment in which Allen lived, but he fails to identify religious categories correctly or to map contemporary nuances. For example, all Congregationists are “Puritans” into the 1780s, a mischaracterization as bad as the misplaced polemics against, first, Jonathan Edwards and, then, Joseph Bellamy. In short, the book may sell well in New England bookstores, but professional historians will have to wade through much unnecessary material to trace the life of the father of Vermont.

*Northwestern College (MN)  
Jonathan Den Hartog*


Since his death in 1945, an aura of myth has come to surround the generalship of George S. Patton. Although Patton is commonly regarded as America’s greatest World War II commander, there exist few detailed operational studies that examine his abilities. The author of this study, who earlier investigated Patton’s Lorraine campaign, now turns his analytical skills to an assessment of Patton’s effectiveness as a commander during the Battle of the Bulge in terms of command and operational technique, mission accomplishment, and cost in lives relative to the gains made by his forces. John Nelson Rickard also provides insight into Patton’s decision-making process (based on what he knew), his estimate of German intentions and capabilities, his awareness of alternative means of attack, and, crucially, the limitations within which he operated.

Despite his flamboyant public persona, Patton valued mundane things such as sound staff work and intelligence information, so he seemed less surprised by the
German attack in the Ardennes than his counterparts. Patton’s bold statement on December 19, 1944, that he could pivot his army and move north within three days to relieve Bastogne was thus not braggadocio but based on sound staff studies. Eisenhower’s instinct to hold the shoulders of the breakthrough intact and halt the Germans before the Meuse was also sound. In retaining Bastogne, though, the line of future action, a methodical advance in a narrow corridor, was already determined for Patton. In most accounts, the skillful ninety-degree pivot of the Third Army, the fierce fighting on the way to Bastogne, and the linkup of American forces complete the story of the Bulge, but this is simply the beginning for Rickard. The key point was what to do next.

Patton had a keen eye for various options and favored the boldest of these: cutting the salient at its base and trapping German forces in the Bulge. He was, however, forced to implement plans adopted higher up. Rickard stresses the limitations placed on Patton by Eisenhower and Bradley, who favored the cautious approach of a frontal reduction of the Bulge. Forced into a battle of attrition and unable to maneuver in the confined space of the Ardennes, Patton’s troops slogged through a month of debilitating fighting. Within the limits placed on him, Patton’s conduct of operations was sound, but he struggled to transmit fully his own intentions and sense of urgency to his commanders. They proved timid, unimaginative, averse to risk, and unwilling to push their troops. Higher up, Eisenhower urged aggressive action but restrained Patton from taking it, while Bradley seemed more interested in regaining control of First and Ninth Armies than in trapping and destroying Germans.

That, of course, was the ultimate American failure. The Germans thrust their head into a noose and American commanders proved unable or unwilling to snap it tight. Amazingly, not a single German unit was trapped or destroyed in the Bulge. Their forces were reduced in bloody battles of attrition, but they ultimately managed a skillful retreat with their divisions intact. Rickard concludes that Patton was effective at the Bulge, but his talents were not maximized because of Eisenhower and Bradley’s inherent caution and fear that his boldness would degenerate into recklessness. Certainly, Eisenhower had to consider the overall situation in the west, but one suspects that, as he implicitly admitted in his memoirs, he did not fully appreciate Patton’s operational ideas. Rickard agrees, concluding that although Eisenhower valued Patton, he failed to use Patton’s abilities to their fullest at the Bulge.

When Anglo-American men beat their drums and carried their colors at the start of a battle in the Pequot War [1636–1637], they saw themselves as enacting a masculine show of force and order befitting of their gendered authority. Pequot warriors, however, could only respond with laughter at what they saw as a pompous and unmanly display. By adding a gendered analysis of masculinity, the long history of intertwined religion and warfare is given new treatment in R. Todd Romero’s study of seventeenth-century southern New England. Romero’s new book persuasively argues that “Native and Anglo-American conceptions of masculinity unfolded in counterpoint over the course of the seventeenth century and were central to the development of colonialism” (7). Native American and Anglo-American cultures of masculinity shared many similarities, but, as Romero observes, “they rarely recognized such commonalities, often focusing instead on differences” (20).

To build his case, Romero employs an impressive range of sources, including English print sources (published sermons, schoolbooks, execution sermons, promotional pamphlets, and others), material objects, and European observations of Native American customs. The book makes an important contribution to the existing bodies of scholarship on gender and colonialism, gender and religion, colonialism and gender identity, and to the literature on masculinity in early America.

Making War and Minting Christians is divided into three parts. The first focuses on gender and established Anglo-American and Native American definitions of manhood. The second examines the topic of religion with a special focus on missionary efforts that began in the 1640s. Missionaries “endeavoured to reconstitute Native masculinity according to English patriarchal ideals that colonists themselves rarely matched” (74–75). The final section focuses on warfare and a comparison of Native and Anglo-American understandings of how religion, masculinity, and warfare were inextricably bound together in the colonial setting.

For Native Americans, manhood was achieved through “exemplary deeds, physical distinction, and spiritual preeminence” (19). For Anglo-Americans, manhood was achieved through a calling, independence, marriage, and reproduction. Native Americans and Euro-Americans both shared a cultural evaluation of men in areas of spirituality, physical prowess, honor, and fighting/warring ability.
Physical abilities and speaking abilities were also shared by the two cultures. But Romero also finds significant differences. Hunting was not as important for Anglo-Americans as it was for Native Americans in their evaluation of manliness, nor did they value sports or gaming as much as Native American men. Both viewed each other’s fighting techniques with suspicion and derision.

Romero finds change by the end of the seventeenth century, noting, for example, a blending of Native and Anglo-American styles of fighting. Romero argues that in the last three decades of the seventeenth century this “maximized casualties,” as both sides perfected their adaptions. King Philip’s War [1675–1676] notably demonstrated this.

As a study of gender and colonialism in Anglo-Indian relations in seventeenth-century southern New England, Making War and Minting Christians is a must read for any student of early American history.

DePaul University

Thomas A. Foster


For several decades in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, neurasthenia—nervous prostration or nervous exhaustion—became so common in the United States that it was considered the characteristic illness of the era. David G. Schuster provides a comprehensive examination of the origins and nature of the condition, but more importantly he captures why it became such an important social, economic, and cultural phenomenon, as well as why, after 1920, it declined so precipitously.

Neurasthenia came to prominence, Schuster argues, because it offered an explanation for a wide range of symptoms—all characterized by chronic physical and mental exhaustion—that affected people in the rapidly changing America of the late nineteenth century. Indeed, the nervous exhaustion that plagued so many white, Northern, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant urbanites was called a “disease of high civilization” (8). The diagnosis itself was proof that Americans had progressed further and faster than their European cousins. Although this was primarily a disease of elites, Schuster uncovers fascinating evidence that clinics in low-income areas were besieged by working-class men as well as women who complained of its symptoms.

Doctors used the diagnosis of neurasthenia to garner greater authority and to “cultivate a community of middle and upper class patients,” who, in turn, could
strengthen the profession (35). But by the late 1880s, commercial interests—purveyors of patent medicine—had become omnipresent in the popularization of the disease, which encouraged people to self-diagnose and buy a wide variety of products to ameliorate the disease’s impact.

Unlike hysteria, which tended to be defined as a condition peculiar to women, both sexes were afflicted by neurasthenia. But one of Schuster’s most important contributions to the historiography is his analysis of how women and men interpreted the meaning of their condition so differently. Men interpreted their symptoms as evidence that they had somehow not lived up to their responsibilities as husbands and fathers. Women, on the other hand, saw their diagnosis as evidence of the social restraints imposed on them, revealing the “flaws within America’s gendered system” (86). This in turn led them to demand “greater freedom to choose the lives and interests they lived” (95).

In the 1920s, neurasthenia faded from the scene, and Schuster provides a sophisticated analysis of why this occurred, incorporating medical, social, and political perspectives. To some extent this decline was due to the medical profession’s inability to provide an adequate etiology for neurasthenia, and, in part, the decline was due to the development of new theories of health, including vitamins and hormones and the growth of psychology and psychiatry. But it was also accomplished through a vigorous effort by the American Medical Association to limit and restrict advertising for drugs, and as a result, the condition was no longer as prominent in the popular culture. Finally, the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act in 1906, amended in 1912 to prohibit fraudulent claims of effectiveness, as well as state laws that had similar provisions, ensured the demise of neurasthenia.

*John Jay College and Graduate Center, CUNY*  
Gerald Markowitz


In today’s divisive religious era, it is appropriate to recall the seventeenth century when an intense polarization existed between Protestants and Catholics in the transatlantic world. It is this world Owen Stanwood asks his scholarly reader to revisit when the antagonism revived with 1678’s “popish plot” and England became convinced that papists planned to assassinate Charles II, torch London, and force British Protestants to convert. There would be carnage, “poverty and hardship” as Catholics claimed all power and wealth (7).
The popish plot exacerbated latent fears in the Protestant English colonies. For them, the world was dangerous because French Catholics often leagued with those near them: Indians, Africans, or Irish. The closer a colony was to a French outpost, the greater the worries. When Stuart kings Charles II and his Catholic brother James II initiated imperial reform, they merely implemented what colonists feared—that a papist monarch would attempt to centralize power and establish absolute rule. Protestants instead came to envision a decentralized empire, united by colonial pledges of loyalty to the monarch.

The Stuarts, however, insisted on organizing their extended and complex empire, which Stanwood attempts to cover from New Hampshire to Barbados. Each area responded differently to the overthrow of James II in 1688’s Glorious Revolution, which brought Protestants William and Mary to the throne. Some colonies remained loyal, but Stanwood maintains that rebellion arose where governors failed to take seriously the local fear of attack by French papists and their allies. If authorities investigated, made arrests, or took other aggressive action, the populace accepted that their government would act to protect them and so remained loyal. Where this was not done, the result was Edmund Andros’s downfall in the Dominion of New England, Jacob Leisler’s Rebellion in New York, and Maryland’s Protestant Association.

Colonial Protestants then concluded that they could only make good their vision of a decentralized empire by vanquishing the French in Canada. This, however, proved impossible, so colonials instead turned to the empire for protection. Indeed, by the end of the century, imperial administrators saw “that anti-Catholic fear could be the ideological glue that held the Anglo-American empire together” (179). Hence, colonists became partners in the empire until they won the French and Indian War, when they would have to “face another age of imperial reckoning” (220).

Stanwood achieves his ambitious task admirably. Future histories of the transatlantic world would do well to incorporate his work. However, Stanwood tantalizes the reader with a too-cursory account of how this culture of fear helped to feed the Salem witchcraft trials: “By executing nineteen witches, the leaders of Massachusetts hoped to show their subjects that they could act boldly against the colony’s enemies at home, even if they could not abroad” (171). It is a testament to Stanwood’s achievement that the reader wants more.

Saint Bonaventure University

Karen E. Robbins

The Civil War demonstrated dramatically the military importance of railroads. The Union and the Confederacy each utilized the iron horse in their fighting strategies, realizing that men and materials could be moved more effectively by rail than by any other form of land transport. By the time of the firing on Fort Sumter, as William G. Thomas reveals, railroads had developed beyond the demonstration period of the 1830s and 1840s. Physical plants and equipment had become more sophisticated, and the nation’s railroad network had greatly expanded, exceeding thirty thousand route miles. Unquestionably railroads had established themselves as “one of the first transformative technologies in America” (10).

The iron horse had a strong impact on the Civil War and the South itself. When war was waged, hostilities had a discernable relationship to railroad lines, junctions, and facilities. Since both North and South utilized rail arteries, skirmishes and battles erupted along and near the iron rails. Simply put, the geography of the railroads became the geography of the war. Fighting along rail routes damaged or destroyed much of the natural and built environment in Dixie. It was no accident that General William Tecumseh Sherman burned Atlanta, the strategic rail hub of the Southeast. Union military leaders came to understand the linkage between railroads and Confederate vulnerability, namely, how “to visualize, calculate, and dominate the geography of the South and to master the scale of the war” (161).

Not only did railroads have a direct relationship with actual fighting, but as the web of iron rails had spread in the South during the 1850s, slavery itself had become more mobile, and, in Thomas’s words, “[Southerners] came to believe that the railroad ensured slavery’s and the South’s future” (34). Southerners felt the changes that the developing railway age and long-distance telegraphic communications had made, believing that there was a unity in the region that had never before existed. The “peculiar institution,” however, died with the Union military victory.

The Iron Way offers a good review of how railroads transformed warfare and how they affected American life, especially in the South. The book is also richly illustrated, including several pertinent maps. In the process of preparing this study, Thomas examined both “traditional” library and archival sources, ranging from memoirs to official government documents, but he located other materials,
particularly newspapers, through online databases. Thomas provides additional information about digital history resources at his website: http://digitalhistory.unl.edu.

Notwithstanding the imaginative usage of source materials, The Iron Way has shortcomings. Thomas does not grasp some basic aspects of railroad history. He misinterprets the functions of railroad operating divisions, seems confused about the difference between operating and public timetables, fails to explain the track-gauge problem, and misnames several companies. His organization is also troubling, repeating frequently his arguments about railroads, the war, and the South.

Clemson University

H. Roger Grant


The Harry S. Truman Library Institute is to be commended for producing Affection and Trust: The Personal Correspondence of Harry S. Truman and Dean Acheson, 1953–1971. Some US presidents have had personally distant relations with some of their cabinet members, even when working together effectively. Cases such as that of Truman and Acheson, in which mutual respect and genuine warmth developed despite major differences in background, merit attention and invite understanding of one possible course even in the busiest of circumstances. David McCullough provides a skillful and fond opening essay, but special kudos are due for the excellent introductions to all the exchanges of shorter notes and sometimes lengthy letters between Truman and Acheson written after Truman’s time as president had ended.

Neither man seems to have been stuck in the recent past that they had done so much to create, yet, sometimes, both offered concerned remarks about specific events and about personalities who emerged to greater prominence in American politics after Truman. Truman wrote of the time “[w]hen Eisenhower went to Korea and surrendered,” seeing it as the cause of troubles in 1958 over Chiang Kai-shek’s efforts to keep the islands of Quemoy and Matsu from being taken by mainland China (206). Acheson wanted Chiang to give up the islands “after a respectable time,” especially if it could be arranged that “[John] Foster [Dulles] has to clean up the mess which his own policies have created” (207). In 1960, when evaluating candidates for the presidency, Truman described as one of John F. Kennedy’s strongest points that he “[wasn’t] a very good Catholic” (248). Both
Truman and Acheson especially disliked Richard Nixon, with Acheson calling him “a dangerous man. Never has there been one like him so close to the Presidency” (249). There are interpretative insights, such as Acheson’s sense of Lyndon Johnson as “both mean and generous” (300). Fittingly, Acheson saw his old colleague Clark Clifford as a “wise and helpful advisor to LBJ,” especially because Clifford could look past everything that made Johnson “so difficult and disagreeable” (306).

Useful reflections on many issues appear. On nuclear military policy, for example, Acheson questioned its practicability (180). Truman, for his part, had a special dislike of “sit down strikes” that were used to advance the cause of civil rights. Truman claimed that, were he a shopkeeper in an affected area, he would throw out anyone interfering with his business (233).

Yet the most important revelation is the fullness of the affection and trust between these two men. Throughout the presidency and for years afterward, the men’s spouses were referred to as “Mrs. Truman” and “Mrs. Acheson.” Truman first asked permission to call Acheson’s wife by her first name (Alice) in 1955. To later generations in which the use of nicknames and first names by complete strangers became constant, Truman and Acheson might seem almost quaint. But their courtesy facilitated candor—as when Acheson provided Truman a vigorous critique of the latter’s memoirs. But the courtesy and respect also nurtured an intriguing and often admirable friendship.

Kansas State University

Donald J. Mrozek


The author of this book brings the secret life of Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais into vivid relief with this well-written, engaging, and fast-paced tour de force. Beaumarchais’s pivotal roles as government agent, diplomat, financier, and advocate of the American Revolution have been relegated to the dustbin of history, according to Harlow Giles Unger; all that remains is his reputation as a famous eighteenth-century French playwright. Unger sets out to correct this one-sided portrait by addressing the clandestine operations Beaumarchais undertook to ensure the American Revolution’s success. The book opens with an overview of the grim situation American patriots found themselves in at the end of 1776, then takes the reader through Beaumarchais’s early years, his growing fame at court, financial windfalls and setbacks, and the enormous success of The
Barber of Seville and The Marriage of Figaro. Unger focuses most of the remaining chapters on Beaumarchais’s support of the American Revolution. Underlying the entire book is the idea that Beaumarchais became “every bit as cunning, resourceful, and witty offstage as his fictional alter ego Figaro was in The Barber onstage” (88).

Unger excels in illuminating Beaumarchais’s complicated dealings with the American revolutionaries, French foreign minister Vergennes, and Louis XVI. Beaumarchais was able to persuade Vergennes to provide secret aid to the American cause through the auspices of his dummy corporation, Roderigue Hortalez et Cie, and to recognize American independence. “By October 1777, Beaumarchais’s ships had landed 200 field artillery pieces at Portsmouth, along with thousands of muskets, thousands of kegs of powder, and enough blankets, clothes, and shoes . . . worth about $20 million in today’s dollars, or nine-tenths of the Northern Army’s military supplies at the time” (139). Although Unger perhaps overstates Beaumarchais’s influence on Vergennes and indispensability to the American Revolution, there is little question that he saved the day during the crucial Saratoga campaign, all the while keeping official French involvement secret.

The last few chapters examine Beaumarchais’s increasingly outspoken stance against the ancien régime and the denouement of the French Revolution. Unger takes a clear critical stance against the Revolution by detailing Beaumarchais’s struggles with the revolving door of revolutionary government officials, close calls with Dr. Guillotin’s eponymous instrument of death, and two-year exile in Hamburg. The book ends with Unger underscoring the Continental Congress’s shameful refusal to honor its debt to Beaumarchais. It was not until 1835 that Congress finally paid about 35 percent of what it owed to Beaumarchais’s heirs.

Given that the book is aimed at a broad audience, the lack of extensive footnotes and sources is understandable, if frustrating. Unger does note his heavy reliance on the earlier works of Louis de Loménie and Elizabeth S. Kite. The book’s major contribution lies in Unger’s ability to capture the multifaceted genius of Beaumarchais, doing justice to his complexity and ardor in supporting reform and revolution at home through his doppelgänger Figaro and abroad through his many disguises. In sum, Improbable Patriot is a page turner that, if not completely original nor completely documented, goes far in reminding us of the critical roles France (in general) and Beaumarchais (in particular) played in ensuring the American Revolution’s success.

University of San Diego

Kathryn Statler
Too little remembered, Saul Alinsky presently serves, ironically enough, as something of both a mentor and a foil for right-wing political activists, as he did during the 2008 presidential campaign when Republicans attempted to score points by linking the author of Rules for Radicals with Democratic Party nominee Barack Obama, a former community organizer in Chicago. This tribute, which is not quite a biographical treatment, hardly attempts to surmount Sanford D. Horwitt’s 1989 lengthy tome, Let Them Call Me Rebel: Saul Alinsky, His Life and Legacy. Rather, Nicholas von Hoffman, who toiled for a full decade as a top assistant for the Chicago-based Alinsky before becoming one of the nation’s leading political journalists, delivers a loving, quasi-warts-and-all memoir or series of remembrances of his subject; von Hoffman labels this “an homage” to his onetime mentor (xiii). Referring to “the man who invented community organizing,” von Hoffman lucidly relates how Alinsky instructed people to “start where you are” (xi, 9). Both men shared disdain for the rich and politically powerful, with Alinsky conducting himself imaginatively and pragmatically, refusing to participate in “unwinnable” campaigns, seek moral victories, or undertake lost causes (31). Considering organizers beholden to those he had recruited, Alinsky expressed contempt for liberals, whom he deemed “soft,” and presented himself as a radical who was “mentally tough” (37, 38).

Though his first community endeavor, the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council in Chicago, became a bedrock of racial exclusion, Alinsky continued to believe that the people would ultimately “make the right decision” (54). Alinsky, who came to revere FDR, acquired various allies along the way, including CIO labor boss John L. Lewis, Marshall Field III, Jane Addams-style social workers, the French philosopher Jacques Maritain, women-loving priests, and both black and white organizers. He explained not having joined the Communist Party: “I had a sense of humor” (97). His own organizations remained democratic, but he ran them as “the boss” (69). Those afflicted with social pathologies, Alinsky recognized, were of little use to successful organizations. Combative himself, he warned against becoming too emotional or ego-driven during negotiations while remaining determined to “fight as though you are 100 percent right” (81).

Alinsky inspired ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) but was little pleased by the greatly expanded welfare state associated with Lyndon Johnson’s administration. As von Hoffman indicates, Alinsky
worried about “gigantism,” whether involving government, big business, or labor unions, casting his lot with “democratic organizations” against massive bureaucracies (151). Alinsky urged those at the bottom of the social stratum to demand more, thereby helping to make the United States “less docile” (165). Enjoying his growing celebrity, he reveled in standing as “a radical bogeyman of national proportions” (169). He particularly loved tweaking “stuffed shirts,” drew on irreverence tactically, sought to “wake people up,” believed that political violence had its place, and remained personally conventional while seeking to make a difference in the lives of many (177, 181). Von Hoffman contributes elegantly to an appreciation of Alinsky.

*California State University, Chico*

Robert C. Cottrell


This book will appeal to regional, social, and policy historians for many reasons. Flood histories emphasizing Mississippi events have overshadowed one of the nation’s worst environmental and human catastrophes. This disaster also compels readers to think more broadly about New Deal conservation policy and beyond the Dust Bowl. Furthermore, the author demonstrates how President Franklin D. Roosevelt capitalized on the disaster and mobilized New Deal relief and recovery agencies on an unprecedented scale.

David Welky has assembled a social history through traditional sources to explain how black and white men and women prepared for, endured, and lived through the deluge in Cincinnati, Paducah, Cairo, and Memphis. Welky also tapped unique records, generated by Louisville’s local radio station staff, to demonstrate how broadcast technology nationalized the event. Equally textured material comes from the American Red Cross, an overlooked nonstate actor whose records—often filed by white women—make it possible to reconstruct disasters and the organization’s financial contribution to recovery. Finally, Works Project Administration reports highlight the back-and-forth conversations between boosters, congressional representatives, and federal agents anxious to relocate Shawneetown, Illinois, after the flood.

*The Thousand-Year Flood* is more than just another flood history because of Welky’s attention to larger questions about the United States’ water management history. Before and after the 1937 flood, FDR’s administration, Congress, and federal agencies jostled over what characterized “comprehensive” flood control. In simplified terms, New Dealers and regional planners envisioned comprehensive
management of people, land, and water via multipurpose dams, reforestation, and community building (e.g., Tennessee Valley Authority). For conservative Democrats and Corps engineers, “comprehensive” flood control included levees, floodways, and limited use of reservoirs.

With this context in mind, human ecologist Karen O’Neill (Rivers By Design) has argued that the 1936 Flood Control Act was important for two reasons: it required cost-sharing at the local level and divided flood control responsibilities within watersheds between the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Corps to undercut the New Dealers. Welky interprets the 1937 flood as a catalyst because the 1938 Flood Control Act removed the cost-sharing requirement, shifted financing to taxpayers, and enlarged the Corps’ flood control responsibilities in the Ohio Valley and nationally. When combined, these two legislative accomplishments ultimately helped conservative Democrats and the Corps weaken the New Dealers’ comprehensive vision.

This reviewer says “weaken” because Congress compelled the Corps to return to the New Dealers’ multiple-purpose models with passage of the 1944 Flood Control Act. After another decade, the Corps faced increased pushback from Southern and conservative Democrats who turned to the USDA for flood control relief. Why the USDA remained powerless until the Corps symbolized the extensive reach of the federal government in the 1950s remains unanswered. As civil and states’ rights converged, the USDA became a politically expedient vehicle for local flood control through a new tool—the 1954 Small Watersheds Program (PL-566)—based in part on the Little Waters treatise that Welky says initially influenced the New Dealers’ comprehensive vision in 1936.

Georgia River Network

Christopher J. Manganiello


According to the editors of this volume, “We will never grasp the full scope of the American Revolution until we take seriously its most progressive participants and incorporate them into our national narrative” (12). This seems to be the purpose of this book, which is composed of twenty-two essays by as many authors of the New Left. In Eric Foner’s afterword, he declares his hope that the tome “succeeds in setting the record straight” (395).

The puzzling thing about Revolutionary Founders is that it is decades too late. For some forty years, the New Left has been almost totally dominant; there has
been little else but radical this and radical that. Assorted radicals, including slaves, women, and American Indians, were incorporated into historical writing of the Revolution long ago. Billed as original, many of the essays are not exactly new. One has been reprinted from a popular magazine. Fourteen others, entertaining though they may be, have been based on each essay author’s own book. Although original in the sense that they are not word-for-word reprints, these essays are, for the most part, more like distillations from earlier work. This reinforces the basic fact that the New Left is no longer new.

These essays also are of varying quality. Jill Lepore, in her account of Thomas Paine, wildly exaggerates when she blasts the “comic-book version of history that serves as our national heritage,” though her unmasking of Batman as Thomas Jefferson may boost the sale of his papers (89). David Waldstreicher asserts that George Washington needed the poet Phillis Wheatley “as an ally” against the plotting of other generals, proving that anything can be overanalyzed (109). Nor can the reviewer accept Woody Holton’s belief that Abigail Adams’s life was a fight “Against Patriarchy” (273). And does Gary Nash really believe that revolutionary Pennsylvania was “a people’s republic” (84)? Given what that phrase came to mean in the twentieth century, one hopes not.

On the other hand, Philip Mead’s account of the life of soldier Joseph Plumb Martin is superb. Colin G. Calloway provides an interesting essay on the Cherokee war chief Dragging Canoe. Calloway’s discussion on generational differences among American Indians is informative. Additional worthy essays include Alfred F. Young’s depiction of Boston mob leader Ebenezer Mackintosh and Jon Butler’s discussion of Baptists in Virginia.

Frankly, one doubts whether some of these radicals deserve a place in the pantheon of American heroes, especially given the mindless violence some of them committed. Take Herman Husband, for example, as portrayed by Wythe Holt. Husband opposed violence except when such threats might further the building of his utopia. He believed that “[f]armers . . ., laborers . . ., and artisans” should wield power (254). Assemblies of such people were formed in the twentieth century and were called soviets. Those utopians redistributed wealth and killed millions in the process.

*Revolutionary Founders* is too long for undergraduates but will be useful for graduate students. They will discover that reading it will spare them the need to buy or read a host of other books.

*Hunter College*  
Philip Ranlet
In imperial China, heaven expressed its will in anomalies that portended change. Confucian court historians reported that dragons appeared over the homes of newborns who would one day seize the Mandate of Heaven, for example, whereas earthquakes, floods, and plagues marked the end times of dynasties. In 1976 an earthquake struck the northern Chinese city of Tangshan, which sits about 175 km northeast of Beijing. Within months Mao Zedong was dead, the Gang of Four arrested, and the Cultural Revolution finally over. This book recounts the events of 1976 in Beijing and Tangshan with a focus on elite politics, and though the title hints at the traditional power of omens in bringing down dynasties, the author’s analysis is neither strongly historical nor political. Rather, the author’s main contribution to our knowledge is his incorporation in this study of some Chinese-language writing on the earthquake and his own contemporary reportage on Tangshan and the People’s Republic of China.

James Palmer immersed himself in the English-language scholarship on the elite politics of the period and spent some time in Tangshan interviewing locals. Specialists will find little that is new in his retelling of party history and Mao’s personal foibles. Readers are introduced to the Seismological Bureau and its head in 1976, Hu Keshi, for example, and their efforts to prepare the region for a temblor. The bureau actually met in Tangshan just weeks before the earthquake to hammer out a scientific consensus on the likelihood of an earthquake. Regrettably, Hu Keshi and the bureau’s role in the politics of the period is not explored in much depth. Similarly, although the earthquake was centered on Tangshan, the book does not aspire to be a local history. There are some black-and-white photographs of the city but little depth to the description of the city and its history. One finishes the book feeling that one has not gotten to know the city very well and wishes that the author had used more Chinese-language sources for this section in particular. In this, the book is not as successful as some of the English-language travel writing of the last twenty years, such as Peter Hessler’s River Town, which described life in Fuling, Sichuan.

Palmer is a witty writer but one prone to superlatives, simplifications, and uncited claims that will make scholars wince. The title of the chapter on the earthquake itself is “Four hundred Hiroshimas,” for example, which calls the earthquake the “most concentrated instant of destruction humanity has ever
known” (124). But there is little in the chapter to substantiate these claims. In the following chapter, he notes that the sharing of food, blankets, and clothing in the aftermath of the earthquake made Tangshan into “the most truly communist place” in the world (145). Altogether, specialists will likely find this book unsatisfying. General readers looking for an introduction to the elite politics of the Mao era, on the other hand, will enjoy and learn from the book.

University of the Pacific

Gregory Rohlf


This collection of essays offers the most comprehensive and updated examination of the flow of commodities, capital, and people between China and Southeast Asia. Wen-Chin Chang and Eric Tagaliacozzo, the coeditors, open the volume with a clear and powerful introduction, providing the historiographical context for and organizational guide to the book. Comprised of twenty essays, the book is divided into five sections with four articles in each. Though the first four essays focus on topics dealing with bigger and more theoretical issues in the longue durée such as Chinese on the mining frontier, the social life of Chinese labor, and opium as a commodity in the Chinese-Nanyang trade, the rest are chronologically arranged to cover precolonial, early colonial, high colonial, and postcolonial periods.

Despite the relatively large number of essays, this collection has achieved impressive consistency and great authenticity with its sharp focus on commodities and heavy reliance on a vast array of primary sources. Each essay concentrates on one or several commodities traded across the region. The wide range of commodities covered by the authors include precious metals, cotton, copper, labor, opium, pepper, sappanwood, coins, gems, books, textiles, fish, rice, Bibles, and edible birds’ nests. What makes the authors’ investigation of the production, transportation, distribution, and consumption of these commodities solid and even groundbreaking is their skillful use of various primary sources collected through archival research, fieldwork, and oral history interviews involving numerous languages, including Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese, Malay, Burmese, Indonesian, and several Western varieties.

While keeping their eyes sharply on commodities, the authors have never forgotten the essential role played by Chinese merchants in establishing networks and keeping commodities as well as capital flowing across national borders.
Anthony Reid, through his study of the tin production and trade in Southeast Asia since the Song dynasty, convincingly shows that it was the Chinese merchants who “brought capitalism, the global economy, and industrial-scale production techniques to areas that had previously been largely jungle” (33).

The Sino-Southeast Asian trade benefited not only Southeast Asian communities but also China’s coastal regions and inland provinces. The copper and cotton trade via land route through Yunnan, C. Patterson Giersch observes, greatly stimulated migration, urbanization, and the local economy in that province. Therefore, the better way to understand the relations between China and Southeast Asia, he suggests, is to examine “state policies, merchant networks, and the creation of circulation corridors” rather than simply follow the popular core-periphery model (48).

What was unique about Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia was that they had never obtained political power or influence that could match their commercial achievements. As a result, they had to accept the Burmese king’s monopoly over the gem trade as well as the “fragile authority of established river chiefs” in the mining frontier (34). The success of the Chinese merchants depended largely on their “relevant knowledge of production and consumption,” no matter whether it was tin, rice, jade, dried fish, or edible birds’ nests.

This collection, with unmatched breadth and depth, sheds new light on the dynamic and complex trade relations between China and Southeast Asia. It can serve as a great starting point for anyone who seeks a single volume as a window to the field of the Sino-Southeast Asian trade.

Kent State University

Hongshan Li

Europe


Of the world’s ceremonial guards, the Swiss Guard of the Vatican may be the most amiable. Unlike, for example, the Queen’s Guard found at Buckingham Palace, the Swiss Guard can often be found chatting with tourists or posing for photographs, resplendent in multicolored uniforms designed by Michelangelo and armed with little more than a halberd and Swiss panache. Considering that the Swiss Guard comprises the bulk of the security for a sovereign state—the Vatican—the guards seem anachronistic, albeit delightfully so. This view of the Swiss Guard is precisely what David Alvarez tries to challenge in The Pope’s
Soldiers: A Military History of the Modern Vatican. In addition to the ceremonial functions of not only the Swiss Guard but also the Papal Gendarmeria, the Palatine Guard, and the Noble Guard, Alvarez reminds the reader that as recently as World War II, Vatican military units actually came under hostile fire. In many ways, however, Alvarez’s book is much like the subject: it is colorful and at times fascinating but also strangely out of place in contemporary historiography.

Alvarez’s intentions are stated clearly in the book’s preface. The book is presented “in the hope of illuminating a shadowy and little-visited corner of the vast edifice of papal history” (xi). In this regard, Alvarez does not disappoint. Benefitting from access to the archives, documents, and official histories of the Swiss, Noble, and Palatine Guards, Alvarez can justly claim to be the first scholar writing in English to attempt to assemble a comprehensive military history of the Vatican armed forces. Alvarez’s research reveals a clear pattern regarding papal military forces: attempts to reform, professionalize, or modernize are ignored—even thwarted—by papal administration until some crisis necessitates change. Typically, therefore, the pope himself comes across as naïve in response to some of the very real threats facing the modern papacy. For example, Alvarez explains, in the wave of revolutions across Europe in 1848, young men volunteered to serve in the papal army, which would cast off Austrian control in the north and unify Italy. “Inspired . . . that their great reforming pontiff Pio Nono (Pius IX), would bless and support a cause that would liberate and unify Italians across the peninsula, men of all social classes rushed to enlist under the yellow-and-white papal flag” (46). This was a force, however, that found itself poorly armed, ill trained, and greeted with “ambivalence” from the pontiff.

Alvarez clearly states that he does not mean the book to be a broader history of the modern papacy (xi). Researchers looking for a discussion of the role of the Swiss Guards either protecting or rounding up Jews for deportation, for example, will be disappointed. More serious, however, is that Alvarez seems to be cheering on the major figures of his work. When the papacy brought in French general Christophe de Lamoricière to provide much-needed training for Vatican troops, Alvarez notes, “[he] needed years to build a new army, but unfortunately he would be given only months” (89). The word choice is unusual; why is this “unfortunate”? Given the increasing bellicosity of European states, culminating in two world wars, it is dubious that adding one more highly trained professional army—albeit one fighting on behalf of the “Vicar of Christ”—would have been beneficial.

Walsh University
Douglas B. Palmer

Polybius is the only Hellenistic historian whose major work survives in any substance. As a leader in Achaean politics, he was denounced as “unfriendly” to the Romans after the Third Macedonian War [168 BC], even though he generally supported or, at most, maintained a neutral stance towards his country’s conquerors, whom he admired. He was deported and detained in Rome for eighteen years, theoretically under house arrest. However, his friendship with Scipio Aemilianus allowed him some freedom, as well as access to the inner circle of the ruling elite. Under such conditions, as an outsider observing his subject from within, he wrote his history of Rome’s remarkable half-century rise to being the dominant Mediterranean power. The resulting work, therefore, is nuanced by conflicting feelings of admiration for Rome and regret for his city’s subjection and the eclipse of Greek independence. Occupying a space between two worlds, Polybius maintained “an intellectual distance” from his subject, making an effort even to justify Rome’s actions, which others judged to be harsh, such as the destruction of Carthage (172, 112).

Donald Walter Baronowsky’s brief, densely annotated monograph cuts to the heart of Polybius’s conflicted attitudes. He scrutinizes the extant text, extracting from it the author’s attitudes toward imperialism in general, the bellum iustum, and Rome’s use of imperial power (73). The book is not a study of Roman imperialism or of Polybius’s historiography but an analysis of a historian’s personal reaction to his times. With less than half of the original text extant, the author remarkably brings to light the historian’s personality and political philosophy.

The introduction comprises a concise outline of Polybius’s life, the chronology of the text, and a lucid exposition of the book’s complex arguments. Part 1 (chapters 1–3) examines the contemporary intellectual attitudes toward Roman imperial domination of Hellenistic philosophers, poets, oracular texts (Greek and Jewish), and historians, while part 2 (chapters 4–9) examines Polybius’s own attitude, which Baronowsky gleans from the extant remains of the Histories, scrutinizing every passage where the historian expresses his own opinions. He discusses, respectively, Polybius’s attitude towards imperialism and legitimate expansion; the acquisition, expansion, and preservation of imperial rule; Rome’s enemies; his service to Rome; Rome as a barbarian state and the role of Fate; and the empire’s survival. Baronowsky’s extensive concluding chapter succinctly summarizes his complex arguments and shows that Polybius approved of the Romans’ mode of domination, as did most contemporary Greek, Roman, and Jewish
thinkers. He also reiterates that Polybius’s purpose was didactic and “pragmatic,” concentrating entirely “on political and military affairs in addressing the question of ‘how less powerful states should conduct their relations with the dominant force of the world’” (175).

Polybius posed three universal questions: how a weaker polity might concede with honour and expediency to an irresistible power, how the latter should exercise its power, and the fate of empires. Baronowsky gives us Polybius’s response, and Kipling’s “Recessional,” which forms the epigraph of this engrossing study, gives us the key.

University of New Brunswick, Fredericton

Adrian Tronson


With an extensive examination of bureaucratic records and forestry journals, Stephen Brain has written the remarkable story of the romantic, prerevolutionary Russian forester Georgii Morozov and his posthumous contribution to the unique strain of environmentalism that developed in Joseph Stalin’s Soviet Union. In this lucid and engaging book, Brain has recovered a little-known chapter in the history of forestry and significantly reshaped our understanding of the Soviet Union’s conservation record.

In the late nineteenth century, St. Petersburg forester Morozov developed a new theory of forest management in opposition to the prevailing German insistence on sustainable yield and monoculture. Arguing that Russian forests possessed their own natural and national character, he proposed that Russian foresters gain an intuitive understanding of the trees. They should identify the idealized “stand type” (e.g., pine forests with white moss ground cover) that soil conditions dictated a forest should naturally belong to and then cut accordingly. The philosophy was pithily summed up as “the cut and the regeneration are synonyms.” As Brain notes, the power of Morozov’s ideas lay as much in the beauty of their expression as in their practicality. Implementing ideal stand types remained a constant source of frustration for his dedicated followers.

After gaining broad acclaim shortly after 1900, Morozov’s ideas met what would seem an implacable opposition in the triumphant Bolsheviks, who “had no sympathy for romantic, nationalist conservationism” (57). Indeed, the immediate postrevolutionary years were hard for Morozov and his ideas. Seeing his legacy under fierce attack, Morozov tentatively joined the White cause before dying in
1920. Meanwhile, pushed by industrialists and student activists, the Bolsheviks turned Russia’s forests over to unrestrained logging. They implemented the particularly disastrous “flying management” policy in the 1920s, which put up vast Siberian forests as credit against severely logged European areas to claim the overall sustainability of Soviet forestry (82). Morozov’s romanticism was replaced with brutal slogans, such as “[t]he development of socialist construction demands the strengthening of the exploitation of the forests of the Soviet Union!” The consequences of such policies had predictably disastrous effects for Russian forests.

And yet, remarkably, Morozov’s ideas survived the clearcutting as smoldering embers ready to burst forth again in favorable weather. Such regeneration came, improbably, with the rise of Joseph Stalin. As Brain puts it, “Dictators like trees,” and, like the Nazis, Stalin presided over one of the modern world’s most progressive forestry programs (115). Through several specially created forestry bureaus, in the 1930s and 1940s the Soviet Union created the largest reserve of forest in the world, mainly for the trees’ value in protecting watersheds (131). In the face of dedicated opposition, which stressed a more doctrinal Marxist position, placing humans above nature, afforestation policies survived even the Great Plan for the Transformation of Nature, commonly seen as the apex of Soviet prometheanism. Though confined only to certain particularly sensitive forests and in service to state goals, followers of Morozov were able to carve out a little corner of freedom amidst a hostile world.

Idaho State University

Ryan Tucker Jones


This book is a wide-ranging portrait of two figures who together represent the challenges and potential of the thirteenth century: Frederick II of Hohenstaufen [1194–1250] and St. Francis of Assisi [c. 1182–1226].

Frederick II appears as the wonder of the world (stupor mundi) his contemporaries believed him to have been. An intellectually curious ruler able to take advantage of opportunities presented to him, Frederick was able—for a time—to meld the German territories and southern Italy into a political whole. He accomplished this despite the opposition of his former guardian, Pope Innocent III. Frederick aroused the opposition of such subsequent popes as Gregory IX and Innocent IV, tenaciously administering the German territories and southern Italy
until the end of his life. For Muslim and Christian relationships, Frederick demonstrated what was possible when he combined his linguistic gifts (including his knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Arabic) with his broader interests in learning; he was able to negotiate with al-Kamil, the sultan of Egypt, for access to Jerusalem without shedding blood as a result of the Sixth Crusade.

Francis of Assisi, along with Dominic Guzman, helped lead the major spiritual reform that produced two new mendicant orders, the Franciscans and the Dominicans. Richard F. Cassady ably shows the frustrations of Francis as he strove to find ways to merge his ideals of poverty and service alongside the organizational necessities of sustaining a group of people sharing strong commitments to the ideal of service. The struggles of Francis proved successful, providing ways for people to serve the needs of their communities, whether in such activities as rebuilding churches or providing relief for the poor.

The subtitle of this book conveys its major surprise. A series of vignettes, travel accounts, and photographs allow readers of this book to join the author on “journeys to medieval places.” These vignettes and examples often illuminate Cassady’s major points. They also show places where important events in the lives of Frederick and Francis took place, and, as Cassady notes throughout his text, key features from the medieval period are frequently still visible within these sites. Through them, readers will gain a more intimate appreciation for the challenges that Frederick and Francis faced.

This is familiar territory for specialists in the period, though Cassady’s use of specific details will attract these readers and illuminate many personal details of the careers of Frederick II and Francis. Cassady has designed this book, however, specially for general readers, who will appreciate his attention to detail, his clear identification of major issues, and his evocative descriptions of places—all presented within a rigorously chronological framework. Both general and specialist readers will find material here to engage their imaginations, and this is no small achievement for an exploration of the complex world within which Frederick II and Francis of Assisi worked during the thirteenth century.

University of South Carolina Lancaster

Ernest E. Jenkins


The author of this book provides an annotated translation of an important source for pre-1914 Jewish life in the Pale of Settlement—a questionnaire consisting of
2,087 questions concerning popular beliefs and lifestyle. The questionnaire—*The Jewish Ethnographic Program*—was part of a project meant to record the knowledge of Jewish popular traditions. It was supposed to complement ethnographic data gathered by the 1912–1914 expedition organized by the writer, revolutionary, and ethnographer Shloyme Zanvil Rapoport (An-sky). The immense data-gathering project had to be stopped much too soon due to the outbreak of World War I, given that many of the eastern front battles were fought in the areas of the Pale and that the Russian army initiated the mass expulsion of the Jewish population from the battle areas. The data collected, including documents, recordings, photographs, and other items of historical importance, were partially lost and partially dispersed among different archives and museums. Some of the latter emerged after the collapse of Soviet Union, when many archival collections became accessible to researchers.

*The Jewish Ethnographic Program* is a list of questions that was published in 1914. Although nobody ever returned filled questionnaires, the questionnaire itself constitutes an important historical document, largely due to its choice of questions. An-sky and his collaborators, including students who came from the Pale and thus were familiar with Jewish life there, often chose to ask directly about the existence or nonexistence of different beliefs and practices in different localities. Today, such questions would be perceived as unduly influencing those answering them. In fact, An-sky also had to face some professional criticism at the time. For historians today, many of these questions show the existence of different popular beliefs that were never documented elsewhere and that were often forgotten after the collapse of the shtetl culture in the Pale of Settlement following the collapse of the Russian Empire and, later, the Holocaust.

To make these popular beliefs comprehensible, Nathaniel Deutsch annotates many of the questions. He presents the relevant rabbinical sources for different aspects of shtetl life. He also engages in oral history tracing different behaviors and beliefs. For that purpose, he interviewed elderly people who had spent their youth in a shtetl. He also interviewed people from different present-day Jewish Orthodox communities, assuming that these uphold some of the traditional shtetl culture and therefore would be able to explain some beliefs and behaviors addressed by the questionnaire. Both sources are problematic, but they do complement each other in explaining aspects of Jewish popular culture in the shtetl.

In order to contextualize *The Jewish Ethnographic Program*, Deutsch presents a long introduction sketching the ethnographic practices in the Russian Empire at the time and discussing the extent to which An-sky’s research project was part of
that scientific context and how far it went beyond that framework. Deutsch describes in detail the workings of the research project and the creation of the questionnaire.

The Jewish Ethnographic Program is an important source for understanding the everyday Jewish life in the Pale, and readers should be grateful to Deutsch for making it accessible to both scholars and to a general audience.

Apeejay Stya University

Inna Shtakser


Notwithstanding growing political divergences between Scotland and England in the second decade of the twenty-first century, W. Hamish Fraser concludes this revisionist study of Chartism in Scotland by observing that, “contrary to the long held view, Chartism in Scotland was not so very different from Chartism in different parts of England” in the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century (216). Drawing extensively on Chartist regional and local newspapers, Fraser identifies similar occupational profiles for Scottish and English Chartists. He concludes that both recruited predominantly from the ranks of small masters, journeymen, and tradesmen (especially shoemakers and tailors), augmented by dispossessed textile domestic workers (particularly handloom weavers and their families). He explores specifically the neglected area in Scottish Chartist studies of the role of women in the movement, some of whom occupied positions of leadership, like the “splendidly named” Miss Seraphina Jessamina Buchanan, secretary of the newly formed Gorbals Female Universal Suffrage Society in 1840.

The author suggests that a more radically inclined middle class in Scotland adopted a more supportive attitude toward universal suffrage than was the case in England from 1843, which contributed to the emergence of an enduring dominant liberalism in Scotland well into the twentieth century (197). Moreover he suggests that both Scottish and English Chartism were nurtured by a combination of political disenchantment, economic frustration, and structural change in the workplace.

However, this first composite history of Scottish Chartism in forty years also maintains that, in contrast to England, Chartism in Scotland was exacerbated by a crisis in the Church of Scotland, which kept religious issues at the forefront of political discourse in the 1830s and 1840s, ensuring greater prominence for the Chartist churches in Scotland than their English counterparts. But Fraser also challenges the tendency of previous historians, influenced by the pioneering L. C.
Wright, to characterize Chartism in Scotland as preeminently socially reformist, recognizing that, despite criticisms of some of the tactics employed by Feargus O’Connor, few Scottish Chartists doubted “his centrality to the success or otherwise of the movement,” implicitly accepting that more forceful campaigning than petitioning might be required if Chartist objectives were to be fully realized (217).

Like Malcolm Chase’s new history of Chartism in Britain, published in 2007, which Fraser commends and his own account usefully supplements, Fraser’s study is structured chronologically but is prefaced by a survey of the political antecedents of the movement from the 1780s and also includes thematic chapters exploring its legacy and distinctive culture. Fraser acknowledges that his study does not engage with all the issues that the explosion of interest in Chartism has generated in the last half century and recognizes that research into Chartism in the Scottish localities still lags behind research into English Chartism at the grassroots level, but his book will be welcomed by students of Chartism as a timely widening of the scope of historical inquiry into this seminal movement.

University of Huddersfield

John A. Hargreaves


This study makes an important contribution to our understanding of the tensions that characterized the years following the Restoration as well as the significance of the court as a political institution. Indeed, Matthew Jenkinson makes a strong case that the court, as such, was a key factor contributing to “a profound interrogation of British kingship” (4). In doing so, he goes a long way towards clarifying our understanding of the court, a term that has troubled historians for years.

Jenkinson helps us to view the world of Charles II as more than an undeniably rich source of anecdote and titillation and to study it as “a political institution to be taken seriously, whose vibrant cultural life could be used to navigate contemporary political complexities” (7). He does so by relying on a variety of evidence, including processions, sermons, plays, and poems, which allows him to take advantage of important work on the period from various disciplines. In doing so, Jenkinson is able to provide a picture of the tensions within the court and to examine the ambiguities that make it a less monolithic source of political culture than described in the past.

Jenkinson draws attention to the contested message emanating from the court. The “martyred” regicides are contrasted with the coronation of the king; the
sermons at court are used to show the advice as well as implicit criticism the king and courtiers encountered, even if the court wits laughed at clerical denunciations of their gambling; and plays performed at Whitehall are shown to offer both flattery and pointed questioning of court morality. In his “Understanding” of Calisto,” Jenkinson draws attention to the dangers of the wild sexuality at court and to the reliance on deception, disguise, and the inversion of values by libertines at court. The representation of Jupiter/Charles as derelict in his duties and responsibilities while pursuing what Jenkinson rather too often refers to as “priapic pleasures” must have been unnerving to a Whitehall audience that could not have failed to recognize themselves on the stage. Most importantly, Jenkinson draws attention to the fact that the most abused and traumatized character in the play was performed by the young Princess Mary herself, thereby offering “a serious moralistic critique of a dangerous philosophy and way of life.” Though the present reviewer found this a most interesting chapter on the existence of harsh criticism performed before the court, it is worth remarking that Jenkinson himself is forced to admit that “it seems that no one noticed” (132).

Culture and Politics is an excellent addition to our understanding of the Restoration court. The author’s analysis of the damage done to the monarchy by the king’s patronage of the libertine court wits is insightful, but as in any attempt to determine its effect on public opinion, there remains the problem of audience and the importance of the public sphere. Libertine writings appear in several manuscript collections, but how well known or influential were their ideas at the time? Jenkinson argues that the government’s acceptance of its inability to control public opinion led to the “engagement with public sphere throughout reign,” though this development may not be as novel as he claims (86). In any event, the author’s demonstration of the fractures within court culture guarantees that this story will be essential reading for any student of Restoration politics, political culture, and the court of Charles II.

University of Delaware

John Patrick Montaño


Throughout the seventeenth century, colonists in the English Atlantic maintained crucial commercial ties with Dutch traders. In fact, without Dutch help, settlers in Barbados, the Leeward Islands, and New York, who are the focus of the book, would not have survived. Little wonder these colonists did all they could to resist
English mercantilist policies and regulations. And yet, by the early eighteenth century, most had accepted integration into an exclusive British commercial empire. How did this come about? In answering this question, Christian J. Koot highlights the significant transnational connections of the Atlantic world, suggests how collective decisions of individuals on the periphery helped shape the British Empire and its various commercial cultures, and contributes to the literature on the rise of early modern national empires.

In the early years of English Atlantic settlement, colonists, neglected by English merchants, struggled to buy supplies and transport their staples to market. They turned not only to other English colonists but to foreigners, especially the Dutch. Little interested in settling their own colonies, the Dutch chose to participate in the emerging Atlantic world mostly as carriers. They made attractive partners with low-priced goods, competitive shipping rates, and abundant credit. As the Dutch helped to develop the English Atlantic, however, they increasingly became targets of metropolitan policymakers eager to obtain for England a greater share of the growing profits. Yet initially neither Navigation Acts nor warfare could keep English colonists from trading with their Dutch partners. As Koot ably shows, in each colony local conditions dictated a different range of legal and extralegal responses.

Throughout the book, in fact, Koot makes the most of fragmentary Dutch and English records to uncover the complex strategies traders used to bypass English protectionism. He emphasizes that traders and merchants, convinced that imperial boundaries should not stand in the way of profit and colonial success, pragmatically combined legal, quasi-legal, and illegal tactics. Such strategies included Dutch ships carrying both Dutch and English papers, complex routing, transnational partnerships, and collusion with local officials, often in bewilderingly complicated combinations designed to fit local economic and political circumstances.

By the turn of the century, however, the power of the English state had grown; evading policies became increasingly difficult, convincing growing numbers of settlers that British protectionism worked. Simultaneously, British traders became more interested in the rapidly developing English colonies, making resort to Dutch traders less necessary. At the same time, the interests and corresponding ideologies of the West Indian colonies and New York began to diverge. Caribbean sugar planters were increasingly willing to swap free trade for the protection of sugar prices. New York merchants, on the other hand, saw their foreign commercial networks as the key to selling the products of their potentially vast hinterland. Such divergent ideologies would, in fifty years, have important consequences for the British Empire.
In short, Koot effectively shows that the British Atlantic was “a negotiated effort that relied both upon English colonists and Dutch merchants working across imperial boundaries and upon English authorities’ attempts to give shape to the constantly shifting process of colonial development” (224). His book advances historians’ understanding of the genesis of the British Atlantic, the mechanics of legal and illegal trade, the far-flung networks of the Dutch, and the development of political ideologies.

University of Maryland Baltimore County Marjoleine Kars


For gender and church scholars especially, *From Queens to Slaves* does more than its predecessor, *Pope Gregory and the Brides of Christ*, even if the former contains nearly all of the material from the latter, minus the original Latin text. Whereas *Brides of Christ* focused specifically on religious women, the current work is a selection of letters from Pope Gregory relating to all women and includes chapters on aristocrats, royals, and slaves as well as sections on the various stages of matrimony (widows, marriage, and cohabitation). Additionally there are thirteen other letters regarding abbesses and nuns that did not appear in *Brides of Christ*. The newly added index is also particularly helpful.

Yet the retread of material, about which the author is upfront, does not stop with the reprinting of translations. The first chapter of *From Queens to Slaves*, wherein the author provides the historical setting for Gregory’s actions, appears largely unaltered from one book to the next. Much of the minute commentary on the letters has also been reused with little additional insight into the material. The inclusion of numerous typographical errors, like missing quotation marks (30, 59, 70, 71, 74, and more), mislabeled footnotes (84), and a sentence dropped in midthought (77), also detracts from the book’s overall value.

Of greater concern is that although John R. C. Martyn’s commentary explains who is in the letters and the context behind them, observations beyond this usually amount only to a rewording of the translation or notations of little use, like “Pope Gregory wrote totally different letters” to different women depending upon their status (48). Many remarks have precious little to do with women at all, like the statement that the pope’s envoys were expected to carry money and keep accounts of expenditures (178). As such, *From Queens to Slaves* does little heavy lifting in the creation of a central, uniting argument. The author’s assertions that Pope
Gregory, who was raised by a gaggle of female relatives, took pains to protect women of all stripes more so than other popes lack veracity due largely to the paucity of poignant commentary and comparison with other papacies (23, 200). For example, in one poorly written explanation of a letter, the author claims Gregory showed his special sympathy for women after offering kind words to one patrician, Clementina, regarding her husband’s death (82–83). The fact that Gregory denies her request for a particular deacon and, in the very next letter, reveals his desire to investigate Clementina and her servants for slander just as likely indicates that he was expressing simple condolences while treading carefully with a potential powerful troublemaker rather than taking any special concern. Although the author does indeed demonstrate that no other scholar has made any real use of Gregory’s letters to women before, it seems we are still waiting for this to occur, making From Queens to Slaves useful as a collection of translations grouped by topic, but less so in the realm of new scholarship (21–23).

West Liberty University

Darrin Cox

Deterrence through Strength: British Naval Power and Foreign Policy under Pax Britannica. By Rebecca Berens Matzke. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2011. Pp. x, 306. $45.00.)

Historians have long questioned the idea of the “Pax Britannica”—a period of global peace and stability made possible by the protective shield of the Royal Navy. They doubt whether British naval strength alone could exercise effective leverage against the other Great Powers. In Deterrence through Strength, Rebecca Berens Matzke convincingly demonstrates how Britain combined vast naval resources with adroit diplomacy to play an important role in shaping European affairs. Through an exhaustive study of government archives and personal papers, Matzke reveals how policymakers used the threat of naval action to secure vital national interests and preserve an independent foreign policy. She contends that the navy acted as a “deterrent force” against would-be adversaries and that “it played that role skillfully” (8). The result is an important new study that reasserts the primacy of Britain and the Royal Navy in maintaining the nineteenth-century balance of power.

The book is organized thematically in a way that allows readers to comprehend the intersection of diplomacy and naval power. Early chapters provide a sweeping overview of the Royal Navy and British foreign policy. Matzke establishes how a powerful navy, combined with advances in steam technology as well as a substantial reserve fleet, left little doubt in the minds of foreign states that Britannia
ruled the waves. She also explores the “prebureaucratic environment” of early Victorian government. Downplaying the role of “public opinion” in policymaking, she shows how individual leaders “operated within certain political constraints but made rational choices about their dealings with other states” (35). The most important chapters are three detailed case studies of the navy’s deterrence role in North America, China, and the Mediterranean. Matzke explains how American fears of British attacks against their coastal cities averted war during periods of tense Anglo-American relations. Her study of the First Opium War [1839–1842] shows how British naval power, particularly new steamships, coerced Chinese authorities while simultaneously sending a pointed reminder to European powers of the navy’s global presence. Her final chapter details how British statesmen employed the navy in the Mediterranean in a successful bid to deter French intervention during the Syrian Crisis of 1839–1841. These case studies deal far more extensively with naval deployments and diplomatic posturing than the actual use of armed violence. As Matzke explains, “that Britain was ready for but only rarely involved in active hostilities signifies not weakness but wise policy and the effectiveness of the Royal Navy as a deterrent” (223).

Matzke’s scholarship is a valuable contribution to the vibrant historiography on Victorian foreign policy and the Royal Navy. She aptly bridges the divide between diplomatic history and military/naval history. Moreover, she writes in an accessible style that will appeal to specialists and nonspecialists alike. One of the book’s few flaws is that her exceptional analysis does not extend to other potential case studies such as British naval intervention in the Greek War of Independence. This is an important book that should be read by anyone with an interest in diplomatic or naval matters.

University of Alabama

John C. Mitcham

Faces of Perfect Ebony: Encountering Atlantic Slavery in Imperial Britain. By Cathe-}


Following the approach pioneered by David Dabydeen in Hogarth’s Blacks, Catherine Molineux provides a generously illustrated survey of the representation of black subjects in various cultural forms, both “high” and “low,” during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. She revisits much of the ground covered by Dabydeen in a chapter on Hogarth’s satire but also broadens the focus to include seventeenth-century portraits, plays, and newspapers, as well as eighteenth-century prints, pamphlets, and commercial advertising.
Though the book’s title suggests a British survey, most of the evidence cited was produced in London. Since the capital was home to the largest black population in the British Isles as well as a center of imperial trade, including African slavery, this focus is certainly justifiable, but as the author makes clear, this book is about white “constructions” rather than black experience.

Molineux argues that the “ambiguity of slavery” and the “multiplicity of meanings attached to black subordination” suggested in her sources allowed Britons to distance themselves from the “black trauma” associated with enslavement. Her analysis begins by highlighting the importance of European models, particularly the work of Anthony Van Dyck, for several Restoration portraits of English noble subjects. These images not only idealized the relationship between predominantly female masters and their “exotic” child slaves but also established the trope of benevolent domination that would be reworked in other cultural forms to the end of the eighteenth century.

Drawing on methods commonly associated with art history, the author examines individual paintings, such as Pierre Mignard’s often reproduced portrait of the Duchess of Portsmouth, in detail in order to uncover precedents, iconography, and artistic context. Such close readings are then applied to the author’s other sources, including multiple versions of Aphra Behn’s *Oroonoko* and the “Mungo” slave image first associated with Isaac Bickerstaff’s play *The Padlock* but found in both abolitionist literature and political satire. For example, Molineux’s reading of William Dent’s *Poor Blacks Going to Their Settlement* deftly illustrates how the engraving, which employs the Mungo imagery to represent black settlers on their way to the newly founded colony in Sierra Leone, was in fact a criticism of the Fox-North coalition whose corruption was held responsible for the loss of the American colonies. Dent’s engraving thus conflated the removal of poor, free, black loyalists from London with the expulsion of the coalition government from office. The engraving also features a black figure wearing a Native American headdress standing in a shop doorway, which elsewhere Molineux identifies with tobacconist advertising. She makes the persuasive argument that these images, which showed blacks and whites sharing the pleasures of smoking, naturalized the empire among London’s consumers while avoiding any explicit reference to slavery. Unlike many of the other sources the author considers, the majority of Londoners would be exposed to tobacco advertising, but what they made of such imagery remains to be discovered.

*Saint Mary’s University*  

Michael E. Vance
Nuns Behaving Badly: Tales of Music, Magic, Art, and Arson in the Convents of Italy.  
By Craig A. Monson. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010. Pp. 241. $20.00.)

Many of us have been tempted to do it at some point. After years spent mining archives to explicate a text or further a scholarly argument, we get the urge to do what historians have always done, tell a story. For those so tempted, Craig A. Monson’s prologue, in which he recounts his departure from the straight and narrow path of musicological researcher to become a teller of tales, will resonate.

While at work in the Vatican Secret Archives, sifting through early modern records of the Sacred Congregation, an agency charged with monastic oversight and deliberation about discipline, he discovered stories “too compelling to consign back to archival oblivion” (8). From the hundreds of thousands of Congregation documents “all tied up in some two thousand buste (‘envelopes’—though in this case ‘bales’ would be more accurate),” Monson chose five of his best finds for this book (3). Selected for their innate interest, and because they left the most complete paper trails, these tales from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries describe the misadventures of nuns from convents in Bologna, Reggio Calabria, and Pavia. All of the stories are engaging, and all triggered crises that might have disrupted convent life for generations.

Wisely deciding to simplify the syntax of the formal petitions and interroga-
tions from which these stories emerge, “avoiding the strings of gerunds so popular in the original documents, for example,” and translating dialogue and testimony clearly and compellingly, Monson then embeds each episode in a richly detailed context (22). Descriptions of earthquakes and famines, carnival and spectacle, and the fine art of silk embroidery and sericulture provide the backdrop for escapades of indomitable nuns like Christina Cavazza, thwarted opera aficionado; Donna Florentia Campanacci, enchantress and charm purveyor; and the lovesick Angela Aurelia Mogna.

Collectively, these stories can be read as moral tales, evidence of the fact that excessive pruning, grafting, and constriction, though good for bonsai, are destruc-
tive of the human spirit. The nature of the nunnish transgressions recounted here varies, roughly reflecting the level of wit and learning of the individual miscreants. Thus, we find accounts of dabbling in kitchen-table magic and slander campaigns, along with more elaborate ruses, like an ill-conceived arson plot. But regardless of whether they were sophisticated or simpleminded, all were actions calculated to bring surcease from, if not a way out of, the confines of a monastic routine less than enthusiastically entered into.
Initially, the reviewer wanted to grumble about the tabloid wrapper for this paperback, but she changed her mind. If it sells more copies, as it is clearly designed to do, that’s good. If readers discover that they have purchased something quite richer in texture and historical content than the mildly humorous exposé of naughty nuns that they might have been expecting, so much the better.

Elizabeth Makowski


This book is the sixth volume to appear in the ten-part series New Edinburgh History of Scotland, designed to provide a full narrative and fresh analysis of the history of Scotland. Richard Oram’s volume is a worthy addition to the series. It covers the period from the arrival of the Anglo-Hungarian princess Margaret in Scotland and her marriage to King Malcolm III, traditionally seen as the starting point of a process of change in northern Britain, to 1230 when the last dynastic rivals to the kingship of Margaret’s descendants were finally eliminated.

There are several main themes to this volume. The first is dynastic. The way in which the offspring of Malcolm and Margaret established themselves as the legitimate line of Scottish kings was a matter of political and military confrontation with claimants whose rights were just as strong. These confrontations were persistent enough to suggest significant support for these rivals. Inextricably linked to the dynastic issue was the extension and intensification of the lordship exercised by the kings of Scots. Provinces with distinct identities, like Galloway, Moray, and Argyll, were drawn more fully into an administrative and ideological framework centered on the kings of Scots. This process lasted the whole period and left a realm that was still rather varied in nature. Oram deals with these themes together in the series of chronological chapters in part 1 of the book. These create a detailed and convincing narrative of the period in which more attention is given to the status and goals of other rulers. In this way Oram is much more nuanced in his discussion than are many previous studies of this period. However, it is hard to dispel the language and idea of state building as the principal theme of these chapters. The identification of David I as “building” a “Scoto-Northumbrian realm” is a manifestation of this (74). The language is anachronistic and takes us away from a world where even the name of Scotland could mean both a region north of the Forth and the whole of the Scottish king’s lordships beyond the Tweed.
Another theme is dealt with in a series of individual chapters on power, rural society, urbanization, the nobility, and the church. These sections tackle the internal change that has long been recognized as fundamentally altering Scottish society in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Compared with previous attempts to deal with these topics in a form useable by students and general readers, Oram’s approach combines accessibility with detailed exemplification. The trade-off inherent in this thematic approach to social change is that key links between the political narrative and church or aristocracy are missed. Thus the formation of a Scottish ecclesiastical province by the papacy is not mentioned in the chapters on the period despite its close relationship to the status of the Scottish king. Nor is the development of aristocratic society given any role in the development of royal lordship. This is a consequence of difficult decisions to be made in any such study, and Oram is generally to be praised for the perceptiveness and coverage he provides.

University of St. Andrews

Michael Brown


This new book, a cultural historiography of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, analyzes a fundamental paradox of Russian history: why have Russia’s rulers frequently employed terror to achieve greatness and state progress, and why have Russia’s people accepted this arrangement? Drawing on archival evidence and all relevant Russian historiography from the early nineteenth century onward, as well as representations of the two tsars in literature, the fine arts, and film, Kevin M. F. Platt argues that the imperial and Soviet regimes used Ivan and Peter as “invented myths” to shape the Russian national identity (2–4). Historians have generally lionized Peter as a visionary ruler who used repression to make Russia great, even sacrificing his son, Aleksei, for the good of the Fatherland, and have vilified Ivan for unleashing terror and chaos on Russia because of his personal traumas and paranoia. At times, as under Stalin during World War II, they praised both tsars for expanding the Russian Empire and eradicating class enemies. However, in the arts, Ivan was the object of the more controversial mythic representations because of the operatic character of his reign, which allowed artists to criticize implicitly the unending violence of autocratic repression, and because the imperial government barred theatrical portrayals of the Romanov dynasty.

A short review cannot do justice to this meticulously researched, highly original book that enhances our understanding of Ivan and Peter as Russian cultural myths
and instruments of state control. For example, in the chapter “Filicide,” Platt brilliantly draws the connection between the historiography, literature, theater, painting, and sculpture of the 1850s and the 1890s to show why Peter’s execution of Aleksei was justified as a necessary, enlightened act of violence unlike Ivan’s senseless killing of his son and heir, an event represented in Ilya Repin’s sensational 1885 painting, which shocked the government and public when first exhibited four years after the assassination of Alexander II in 1881. Even more revealing, Platt explains how Nikolai Ge’s 1871 painting of Peter I interrogating Aleksei stylistically inspired Repin’s masterpiece and how both paintings informed all subsequent depictions of the two rulers in print and the arts, especially when both men and the concept of state progress through coercion were rehabilitated during the Stalin era (119–121).

Even excellent books have limitations. Not all readers will agree with Platt’s revisionist interpretations, such as his claim that the Soviet novelist Aleksei Tolstoi maintained his independent voice in publishing his frequently adapted historical novel of Peter I between 1918 and 1945 rather than mechanically adhering to the party line; as Platt acknowledges, Tolstoi consistently enjoyed Stalin’s patronage (for reasons the author does not explain), and this undoubtedly was pivotal to Tolstoi’s survival and success throughout the 1930s (251). Such caveats aside, this is an outstanding work of scholarship that will benefit all specialists of modern Russia and, more broadly, readers with previous knowledge of the historiography and cultural artifacts covered in this book. They will better appreciate why Russia’s leaders, in eschewing more liberal democratic directions, will continue to emphasize the cultural myths of Peter and Ivan to validate Russia’s need for strong central rule.

Monmouth University

Thomas S. Pearson


The relationship between Polishness and Catholicism is both obvious and elusive. It has changed in many ways over more than a thousand years, and it continues to change at the start of the third Christian millennium. In order to sidestep the intractable problem of the *essence* of Catholicism, Brian Porter-Szücs treats it as a discursive field, distinguishing between concepts that could or could not be either included or excluded. These boundaries have shifted significantly over time—notably regarding acceptable and unacceptable references to Jews. This is a theologically and sociologically informed work, but it is not theologically or
sociologically driven. It is a fruitful approach for the study of intellectual history and lends itself to a blend with the study of high politics—of the sort that Neal Pease has recently illuminated in *Rome’s Most Faithful Daughter: The Catholic Church and Independent Poland, 1914–1939* (Athens, OH, 2009).

Porter-Szücs takes ten aspects of this relationship and in ten thematic chapters analyzes their development over the last century and a half. From the concept of the church, he moves through sin, modernity, the person and society, politics, the nation penitent, *Ecclesia Militans*, the Jews, and *Polak-Katolik* to finish with the figure of Mary—both militant and maternal.

The author repeatedly leads the reader from the nineteenth century to the present and back again, showing how in various ways the clergy has at varying paces adapted to changes in society, politics, and culture, within shifting discursive boundaries. For example, the late-nineteenth-century emphasis on individual sin—and its eternal consequences—has gradually given way to a focus on the dangers facing the national community. Porter-Szücs peels back later narratives of resistance to reveal the extent to which the nineteenth-century hierarchy promoted loyalty to the partitioning monarchies, which dovetails with the evidence presented for a relatively late and incomplete rapprochement between the clergy and the hard-line nationalism of the “endeks” during the interwar years.

The author is focused on the particularities of Polish Catholicism, but he also strives to compare it to processes in the wider Catholic world. He has concentrated on the writings and utterings of the clergy, rather than the laity, a decision which may in part reflect the strongly clerical character of the Catholic Church in modern Poland compared, for example, to Germany. The overall picture is many layered but coherent.

It is hard in a work of this scale to avoid errors. The author’s touch is less sure when dealing with the period before 1863 and especially with developments before the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth for which he relies on a limited and often long-superseded literature. Though dating the 1794 Kościuszko insurrection to 1795 may be a typographical slip, Porter-Szücs is lost regarding the episcopal and archepiscopal sees of Kraków and Warsaw (210). Jan Pawel Woronicz preached his inaugural sermon as bishop of Kraków in 1815; he became archbishop of Warsaw in 1827 (cf. 8, 118, 210, 224–25). Despite these and other quibbles, scholars should welcome this learned and thought-provoking work, which challenges shallow and stereotypical slogans about Polish Catholicism.

*University College London*  
Richard Butterwick
A masterful weaving of narrative, historiography, and discussion of the substantial impact that memory has had on historical subjects constitutes the basis of Simon Price and Peter Thonemann’s history of the classical period in Europe. Though subtitled “A History from Troy to Augustine,” the book actually considers an even longer time period, as it commences with discussion of Bronze Age civilizations in Crete and mainland Greece. Proceeding in nine chronologically arranged chapters, this book will be of interest to historians of the classical Greek and Roman periods as well as to those interested in the historical study of memory. It will also reach a wider audience; interspersed throughout the text are inset boxes containing interesting stories of how people in more modern times have remembered and utilized the classical past for their own purposes. In addition, the authors provide discussion of many of the central issues current in Aegean and Mediterranean archaeology.

Beginning earlier than most histories of the classical period, the authors see the origins of Greek history lying in the palace-based Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations of the late Bronze Age. Although the authors note differences in these two earliest Aegean civilizations, these societies are depicted in the first chapter as having a greater degree of similarity than has been generally claimed. Discussion of the archaeological site of Troy and the Trojan War at the end of the initial chapter provides the context for one of the main themes of the book, that is, that the Trojan War was the oldest and dearest memory for not only ancient Greeks and Romans but many other peoples of the Mediterranean world as well. The Trojan War and its aftermath thus became the “foundation of European identity” (44).

That the Trojan War was the oldest memory of the classical age Greeks is no surprise, but the authors also fully examine why Romans, Etruscans, the Veneti, and other Mediterranean peoples found it in their interest to create ties with ancient Greece. As we now understand, however, many times these connections did not really exist; thus, these ties to the Greek past show a “chronology of desire” (7). The Romans are said to have learned from early on the importance of presenting themselves as having Greek connections. Livy’s story of Rome’s conquest of Etruscan Veii is described as a retelling of the Greek sack of Troy. Fabius Pictor’s early history of Rome began with the story of Hercules, Evander, Aeneas, and the founding of Alba Longa. Even Julius Caesar in his funeral eulogy for his aunt Julia claimed her to be descended from Aeneas.
Earlier, during the Hellenistic period, the authors explain, hundreds of cities all across the Near East suddenly discovered ties to the ancient past of Greece, as Greek deities and Greek heroes began to appear at the beginning of family trees. The leaders of Sidon, for example, suddenly realized, when it became politically expedient for them to have Greek connections, that they had a special place in Greek myth, as Europa and Kadmos were children of Agenor.

Later, as Rome became a Mediterranean power, its neighbors began to create ties with the Roman past—again for contemporary political reasons. For example, the city of Segesta, which lay within the Carthaginian zone of influence of western Sicily, decided to destroy the Carthaginian garrison and side with Rome because they became convinced of their kinship with Rome, as both cities were said to have descended from Aeneas. But it was during the imperial period, simultaneous with the rise of Christianity, that the Romanization of the western provinces of the empire worked to erase many of the memories that had guided so many generations in the past. As memories “defined, united, and divided” peoples in the ancient world, those in Roman Gaul and Britain, as a result, are thus described as being peoples without a history.

One of the greatest contributions of Price and Thonemann’s work lies in providing up-to-date assessments of a number of current historiographical debates that have arisen as the result of archaeological findings in recent years. Analysis of the historicity of the Trojan War itself constitutes only one of several important debates the authors introduce, and they provide their own commentary on the matter. Among other ongoing historical issues that are discussed are the date of the Thera eruption, the “Ahhiyawa” question, the origins of early Israel, the historicity of the Greek migrations, the Al-Mina question, and the cause of the land ownership problem in mid-second-century BCE Rome.

University of North Texas

Ken Johnson


The past few years have witnessed major dynamism in the field of archaeological and historical textile research in Europe. Klavs Randsborg’s volume contributes to this new and exciting body of scholarship by providing “a new discussion of Danish Early Bronze Age textiles: in a cultural, social and economic perspective” (11). In contrast to most studies on Bronze Age economy and exchange, which concentrate on metals, the author argues for the importance of textiles in regional and long-distance economic exchange and suggests that textiles were the major
trade item (not amber) exchanged for metals and contributing to the wealth of the north during the Bronze Age (103). The author is to be commended for setting prehistoric textile research into a wider context.

The book is organized into six chapters, each with subheadings, which cover the background and issues raised by the book, description and discussion of the material, its analyses, cultural aspects, comparative material from the wider European region, and conclusions. Figures and tables are grouped in the center and the back of the volume respectively, and one is forced constantly to flip back and forth through the book. The black and white figures are rather poor, and it would have been useful to have pictures of all the costumes and iconographic images discussed in chapter 3, especially considering that excellent new photographs of the Bronze Age costumes and much of the comparative material have recently been made available by the National Museum of Denmark on http://oldtiden.natmus.dk/.

The study is based on the work by Danish textile historian Margrethe Hald published between 1930 and the 1950s. The author notes, “A fresh detailed and methodologically inventive first-hand study of the Bronze Age textiles is also needed,” so it is lamentable that he has not deemed it worthwhile to find out about the new research being carried out since 2006 at the Danish National Research Foundation’s Centre for Textile Research, based in his own institution (14).

The study takes up important issues, such as the use of tools in tracing textile technology, degree of textile craft specialization and standardization, quantity of textiles consumed, seasonality of the garments, social roles and status of the buried, and significance of nudity, which Randsborg associates with divine status. However, much of the factual information has not been checked: the belts in the oak coffins are not tablet weaves but warp-faced tabbies; Verucchio mantles are not “identical” to kidney-shaped cloaks; the Bronze Age silk find from Germany is highly controversial; and the Danish bog finds from Borremose have been redated by carbon-14 procedures to the early Iron Age (article by Mannering et al. [2009] cited by the author). Many interpretative aspects are rather problematic, such as direct ethnographic comparisons with Africa, archaeological and historical comparanda from the civilizations of the Aegean and the Near East, or issues of textile preservation. Although the discussion of “female sanitary napkins” is commendable, the evidence for them appears scanty and the arrangement suggested would most certainly be rather uncomfortable. The discussion of string skirt origins does not include the important contribution by E. J. W. Barber in 1991. Much of the recent bibliography on textile and dress archaeology and
history is outdated or lacking, and many of the terms used do not adhere to long-established terminology.

Though the book accomplishes what it sets out to do, which is to start the debate on the economic and social importance of textiles during prehistory that goes outside the specialist realm, regrettably, the means by which the author goes about it are less than satisfactory. One hopes that, indeed, as the author asserts, “Exciting analyses, discussions and scientific debates are to come” (119).

University College London

Margarita Gleba


This elegant and insightful volume explores the life of Leon Trotsky, surely still the world’s most widely revered Marxist, as a revolutionary, a Jew, and a tragic figure. The three strands of this story, which unfold chronologically, are intimately connected.

Trotsky devoted his life to the proletarian cause, though he was less one-dimensional than Lenin. He wrote on art and literature, loved sightseeing, was an avid hunter and fisher, and took some part in the upbringing of his children and grandchildren. He also dressed like a “meticulous, bourgeois gentleman” (87). Yet, like Lenin, he was politically doctrinaire, asserting in 1924 that “it is possible to be right only with the party and through it” (136). From this outlook stemmed one aspect of his tragedy: he helped build the regime that destroyed him.

Trotsky always displayed independence of mind and action. He kept his distance from all political factions, gravitating toward one, then another. A brilliant organizer and charismatic motivator, he was the active force behind the October Revolution and the Red victory in the Russian Civil War. Yet he could not engage in political intrigue in order to assert his right to lead the Soviet state after Lenin’s death. Moreover, his principled commitments in everything alienated people throughout his life—even the Jewish émigré waiters at his favorite restaurant in New York, who on principle he refused to tip—another aspect of his tragedy.

Theoretically, Trotsky denied anti-Semitism any special status among the injustices of imperial Russia. The only way forward for all oppressed people, he believed, was via socialism. Yet the mistreatment of Jews in Romania, where he reported on the Balkan Wars and the unfair trial of Mendel Beilis in 1913, caused him to react “first and foremost with a feeling of physical nausea” (66). “At moments like these,” Joshua Rubenstein writes, “Leon Trotsky was a Jew in spite
of himself” (67). Tragically, he could hardly believe in 1926 that anti-Semitic agitation was being aimed at Stalin’s opponents, and in 1936, when he called attention to this tactic, prominent Jews in America denounced Trotsky himself for resorting to such a “cowardly device” (177).

Trotsky also suffered terrible personal losses, many at Stalin’s hands. “It was as if someone had assembled Trotsky’s family tree, then systematically denuded the leaves,” Rubenstein writes (185). Rubenstein contextualizes Trotsky’s biography well, thanks to a wide reading in primary and secondary sources, including many unpublished documents in Russian (there is a bibliographical essay but no end-notes). Yet he gets important facts wrong. It is false to assert that in late 1905 the tsarist regime “encouraged pogroms throughout the Pale of Settlement” (45). Lavr Kornilov did not plan “to overthrow the Provisional Government” (93). Aleksandr Shliapnikov, not Aleksandra Kollontai, led the Workers’ Opposition. It is a gross understatement to claim that the so-called kulaks “were accused, often unfairly, of owning too much land” (161). One can deplore such errors while still heartily recommending this compelling book to a wide readership.

University of Illinois at Chicago
Jonathan Daly


This new book is a detailed analysis of the connections and identities between “middle-class” British West Indians and the British Empire from the height of the empire, during the reign of Queen Victoria [1837–1901], up to the present. The author’s analysis fits well into the ongoing reexamination of the British Empire from the points of view of the colonized and the various ways they experienced the empire. As in many of these works, the author moves away from the anti-empire approach that was commonplace in the aftermath of decolonization and attempts a more nuanced view that being part of the empire, and indeed being “British,” was an important part of the identity of middle-class people of the British West Indies.

Anne Spry Rush is careful from the beginning to set the terms of analysis. She confines herself to the territories of the British West Indies, which in practice means the largest of them: Jamaica, Trinidad, and British Guiana (modern Guyana). She spends much less time on the smaller colonies and islands but does include them in her overall discussion. Secondly, she lays out the group that is her primary focus, so-called “middle-class” West Indians. She is not concerned here with white West Indians or British people resident there, as they had upper- and middle-class status
by virtue of color and relative affluence. Rather, she is concerned with the elusive and shifting relationships among skin color and other factors: “At the most basic level (although it was never simple) most people in the twentieth-century colonial Caribbean determined whether a person was middle class by looking at their color, their educational status, occupation, religious affiliations, and culture” (11). She is also less concerned with “working-class” West Indians, who tended to be darker skinned, less educated or noneducated, and poor.

By examining several main categories, Rush lays out a compelling argument that, for middle-class West Indians, being part of the empire and being “British” were key components to upward mobility, social status, and identity. She focuses in particular on the educational systems of the colonies, the relationship to the monarchy, participation in wartime military service, and the significance of the BBC to show the myriad ties and connections between the West Indian colonies and Britain. She demonstrates how fundamental these institutions were to their identity as both British citizens and to their attachment to their homelands; in her view, one could be both British and Jamaican at once. She makes extensive use of newspapers, government and BBC archives, and oral histories to show how, in many respects, middle-class West Indians had an idealized vision of the empire and Britishness and were dismayed and confused when faced with strong racism in Britain itself or in military service.

Though the book is very well researched and convincing, the author focuses heavily on Jamaica, and this concentration tends to frame her overall argument. What is not addressed is the unique demographics of Trinidad and British Guiana, where the population was split between those of Afro-Caribbean and South Asian origin. It would be interesting to know if the same strong identification of Britishness crossed communal lines. Several sections are devoted to the strong attachment to royal anniversaries and occasions in the West Indies; it is notable that only Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana severed their relationship to the Crown soon after independence.

Canisius College  

David R. Devereux


Is it enough to describe, analyze, and explain “high politics” within the terms of high politics? This study of the 1867 Reform Act will certainly give succor to those who think that it is. To a very large extent, the author’s account of reform is
enclosed within the debates generated in Parliament and among politicians about whether there should be reform and on what terms. There is no question that in doing so Robert Saunders has produced what is a careful, thorough, and useful account of the Reform Bills from Hume’s “Little Charter” of 1848 through the Liberal bills of 1852, 1854, 1860, and 1866 to the final version of the Conservative government’s proposals that became the 1867 Reform Act. Although some of this history will be familiar, Saunders adds a great deal of new detail. In doing so, he illuminates the outlook of some of the key players in these debates, like Lord John Russell, William E. Gladstone, and Benjamin Disraeli, as well as other, often lesser known, figures. He also provides the most comprehensive discussion yet published of the often tortuous calculations, negotiations, and preoccupations underpinning the framing of parliamentary bills. If votes are to be given to the working class, then which sections can be safely enfranchised? What will the effects of redistribution of seats be? How important is it that there be a redistribution? What effects will an enlargement of the franchise have upon the balance of social classes?

Yet what does this all amount to? For Saunders, the 1867 Reform Act was an “accidental revolution,” a product of contingencies that resulted in a degree of enfranchisement that few had foreseen, that many in Parliament did not want, and that produced far-reaching consequences. It is a view that is very familiar, though Saunders offers his own gloss on this by insisting that this does not mean that the debates were bereft of ideas and principles; nor does he wish to underestimate the conservative impulses that lay behind the final version of the act. However, contingencies and accidents are not the same thing, and though the act was far reaching in consequence, the notion that it was “revolutionary” would be hard to justify (however many times this is said of it).

The book has distinct limitations. Saunders has nothing new to say about the development of popular radical, extraparliamentary agitations for reform and virtually nothing to say at all about the issue of women’s suffrage. The author is not interested in the relationship between social and cultural change and political transformation, and he misses the opportunity for extended discussion of some of the interesting problems he raises, such as Disraeli’s ideas of the nation—a more complex subject than he allows. A book that wants to stake a claim for the consequences as well as origins of the 1867 Reform Act needs a more extended discussion of what happened between 1867 and the Reform Act of 1884. Still, it will need to be read by anyone concerned with British politics in the period, even if, at $125, hardly anyone will be able to buy it.

University College London

Keith McClelland
This brief monograph investigates a fascinating subject—the Venerable Bede’s [672/673–735 CE] mention of two Anglo-Saxon goddesses, Eostre and Hreda, who give their names to two of the months of the calendar in chapter 15 of De Temporum Ratione (“On the Reckoning of Time”). This chapter, “The English Months,” in the past has been mined by scholars interested in authenticating the limited information that has survived regarding Anglo-Saxon paganism. However, what spurred Philip A. Shaw’s research was Ray Page’s assertion that Eostre, the better known of the two, was not a true Anglo-Saxon deity, but rather an “etymological fancy on Bede’s part” (50).

To refute this notion, Shaw’s study commences with a sketch of current scholarship pertaining to “pre-Christian religion.” This field is hotly contested, with antinativist scholars arguing that it is impossible to know anything of pre-Christian religions as all the textual evidence was produced by Christian monastics like Bede (this position, in some cases, results in the assertion that “paganism” did not exist at all but is a literary construct). Shaw carefully explains his approach to language evidence and material culture that was not produced by Christians in the Middle Ages, which therefore points to the existence of pagan deities. Chapter 2 covers the linguistic evidence, and chapter 3 examines Romano-Germanic votive inscriptions, concentrating on those that refer to the cult of the Matrons. Shaw concludes that Matron names are associated with “specific geographical features, particularly rivers, as well as names which relate to local socio-political groupings” (45).

Chapters 4 and 5 are devoted to Eostre and Hreda. Shaw reviews earlier scholarship, such as that of Jacob Grimm [1785–1863], identifying problems with the assumptions that underlie such interpretations and then examining the etymology of the names from a linguistic viewpoint, and attempts to connect the most probable meaning(s) with geography and place-names. This last strategy is congruent with his expressed desire to move away from models that posit “pan-Germanic” gods and goddesses and to connect deities with specific communities. He concludes that “Eostre can be understood within the framework of locally-defined goddesses associated with sub-tribal socio-political groupings” (69).

The chapter on Hreda is less confident in its conclusion, in that Eostre’s connection with the name of the Christian festival of Easter is relatively uncomplicated, whereas the actual meaning of Hreda is difficult to pin down, with a
number of possible etymologies, none of which are conclusive. Nevertheless, it appears plausible that she, too, has a specific connection to a subtribal grouping (if “quick” is accepted as the most likely meaning of Hreda), although the month named for her does not continue into the Christian calendar. Shaw’s study is concise and limited in scope, designed to avoid the pitfalls of earlier scholarship. It offers a fresh and productive method for examining fragmentary data for Anglo-Saxon (and, by implication, other pre-Christian) religion. It is a welcome contribution and should find a place in university libraries and on the shelves of early medievalists in general.

University of Sydney

Carole M. Cusack


In this study, the author largely succeeds in his aim of providing a concise overview of Britain’s home front experience between 1914 and 1918. Alan G. V. Simmonds, in trying to steer a path between the broad general survey and the densely argued monograph, writes an accessible and informed study that is organized around themes rather than chronology. The book is strongest in its focus on British wartime policy, and Simmonds does a particularly fine job of analyzing the shift in party politics and the response of coalition government to the crises in food, production, housing, prices, and labor. His cogent and accessible overview of how a nation constructs the machinery of war amidst older assumptions about the nature of government intervention is well argued and persuasive, and the best chapters in the book give detailed accounts of the impact of war on parliamentary government, rural society, and modern official propaganda. For graduate students in British history, this book should be required reading for those who want to understand shifting political alliances, the challenges of managing manpower (and womanpower), and the reluctant move to conscription. Simmonds’s assessment of the Lloyd George and H. H. Asquith factions of the Liberal Party and the seeds of that party’s demise are carefully analyzed here as well. By distilling other syntheses of wartime Britain with primary sources and high-quality monographs, Simmonds offers a fresh approach to many of the important political, economic, and societal questions facing Britain during the war.

For all of its strengths, Simmonds’s wartime Britain is presented here as an island. Scant mention is made of Ireland, and the British Empire is not included in any meaningful way in the study. This decision to focus on the main island allows Simmonds to have a much tighter and more focused narrative, but it does have
implications for understanding the broader role of Britain within its imperial framework. Simmonds also covers the social and cultural aspects of the First World War in Britain in a much less detailed way, with little reference to some of the more recent works by scholars such as Susan Grayzel, John Horne, and Helen McCartney. These authors and others, who examine the nature of cultural mobilization for war and probe the place of Britain in a larger wartime context, would have enriched Simmonds’s discussion. To give one example, Simmonds does a superb job of discussing the nature of public propaganda—posters, newspapers, film, war art, photography—but he does not take into account the other forms of communication filtering into Britain from the battlefronts through war tourism, war expos, letters, and eyewitness reports from soldiers on furlough. Finally, the work lacks a bibliography at the end, which is a shame given the breadth of sources that Simmonds uses here.

Wittenberg University

Tammy M. Proctor


In an impressive work that focuses on analysis rather than narrative, David Stevenson, an expert on the diplomacy of World War I in particular, links the conflict at the front to the state of the war economies at home. The ability to mobilize and deploy resources is seen as the key element, which possibly leads to an underplaying of developments in fighting effectiveness. Stevenson’s grasp of the various home fronts is most impressive. For example, in pointing out the deficiencies of the German propaganda effort at home, he notes the problems created by fundamental disagreements over how domestic propaganda should be orchestrated.

Political differences are linked to the question of war goals, not least in late 1918 as the defeat of Germany increasingly appeared imminent. Suspicious of the French, General Douglas Haig recommended to the cabinet lenient armistice terms, although there was also tougher advice from the military. American readers will find the treatment of America’s contribution particularly significant. The availability of supplies and funds was crucial in 1918, as was the prospect of the use of the numerous American troops shipped across the Atlantic. Stevenson emphasizes the collaboration of Britain and America as indispensable to the Allied victory. That, of course, did not mean that there was no tension, but it was less prominent than in 1944.
The numbers of troops available and soon-to-be available were both key elements. The Germans were increasingly outnumbered, not least because they did not redeploy sufficiently rapidly from Russia. In turn, numbers had major implications for supplies. Thus, both having more troops and having insufficient supplies created problems. The supply situation posed serious issues for supply systems with the Allies as well, confronted as they were by the destruction of the rail system by the Germans. Trucks were increasingly used, but, like tanks, they required petrol.

At the same time, Stevenson correctly emphasizes the extent of a deterioration in fighting quality and does so not only for the Germans but also for their allies. For example, by the summer of 1918, Allied intelligence detected a decline in the efficiency of the Bulgarian army and big increases in desertion. Although the Bulgarians never surrendered en masse, as the Austrians did, once driven from their initial positions in September 1918 they offered only limited resistance. There was also a decline in the fighting quality of the Turkish army, notably in Palestine, with a major increase in desertion, in part in response to a supply crisis. As a result, the well-planned and executed British attack profited from a weak defense, and a large number of Turks surrendered.

Forthcoming anniversaries will bring forth many volumes. It seems safe to predict that this study by Stevenson will have a place in most lists of important works.

University of Exeter

Jeremy Black


One of King Charles’s assets during the English Civil War was his nephew Prince Rupert, an outstanding cavalry commander. And one of Rupert’s assets was reputed to be his dog, a poodle named Boy. This was no ordinary dog. He was described as “a Witch, a Sorceresse, an enemy to parliament . . . a meer Malignant Cavalier-Dog,” and a “four-legg’d Cavalier” (47, 177). Boy was alleged to have demonic powers. He could foretell the future, find hidden objects, and speak many languages (though his native tongue was a blend of Hebrew and Dutch). Most importantly, he could shift shapes or become invisible, and he could make himself and Rupert “shot-proof” or “bullet-proof” (58). Rupert, too, was sometimes depicted as a demon or devil, thus making Boy his “familiar.” There was even an insinuation that Rupert and his dog were lovers.
Mark Stoyle has written a meticulously researched book that traces the history of Boy from his first appearance in the pamphlet literature of the Civil War, through his death at the battle of Marston Moor, to his modern resurrection in historical scholarship and in such improbable venues as the film *Cromwell* and Simon Schama’s book based on his television series, where Boy is ludicrously portrayed as a toy poodle tucked under Rupert’s arm. Stoyle’s analysis of the Civil War propaganda (and the accompanying woodcuts) is exhaustive, ingenious, and significant.

Though the story of Boy may seem trivial, Stoyle succeeds in connecting it to major historical controversies. He argues convincingly that the portrayal of Boy as a witch or familiar was originally invented by Cavalier writers to mock the credulous Parliamentarians as “utter dunderheads” (64). In this he is siding with the “minority view” among scholars today (9–11, 62). Next he shows how the hoax “backfired spectacularly on its perpetrators” when Parliamentarian propagandists took up the theme of witchcraft in the Royalist camp in earnest, literally demonizing the enemy (164). Stoyle reaches the even bigger conclusion that the stories about Boy fill a supposed gap in witch literature before late 1643 with deadly consequences. The process of demonization paved the way for the massacre of Royalist camp-women after the battle of Naseby. “Nor was the Naseby massacre the only human tragedy to which the black legend of Prince Rupert’s dog may be said to have contributed,” writes Stoyle (148). Stoyle also asserts that the “black legend of Prince Rupert’s dog had almost certainly had its own part to play in causing the East-Anglian witch-hunt” (150). Stoyle’s boldest conclusion, contrary to current scholarly opinion and consistent with a much older view, is that belief in witches was more typical of superstitious Parliamentarians than skeptical Royalists.

There is a great deal of inclusive speculation in this book, and Stoyle’s painstaking analysis sometimes threatens to overwhelm the sheer charm of the story. In the end, however, the reader is left with an enduring impression of Boy and the ways in which this dog’s tale relates to important historical issues.

*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Michael B. Young


Historical commemorations tend to generate stimulating academic parleys that challenge conventional notions about key turning points in the past, and the
bicentennial events in 2007 to mark the abolition of the slave trade by Great Britain were no different in that respect. Hence, the “Free at Last?” Conference, held at the Centre for Caribbean Studies at the University of Warwick in July 2007, tried to dispel the still-popular notion that abolition proved the exceptional and almost divine virtue of British elites; the edited proceedings from that programming became the well-organized anthology *Free At Last? Reflections on Freedom and the Abolition of the British Transatlantic Slave Trade*. This collection of seven articles is grouped in three ways: “The Boundaries of Slavery and Freedom,” “Contesting and Championing Freedom,” and “The Legacies of Slavery and Abolition”; even the very titles of these clusters show the authors’ desire to go beyond the familiar and dramatized trail through Clapham to the parliamentary legislation itself to get at the more meaningful West Indian and Atlantic contexts that often blurred the lines between slavery, abolitionism, and freedom. Most gripping, however, is the editors’ introduction, which contains an account of extemporaneous protest at a Westminster Abbey commemorative service by a lone Afro-British activist, Toyin Agbetu, in March 2007. The message behind Agbetu’s outburst comes alive, via the editors’ well-chosen prose, and it provides a wonderful segue to the scholarly details and discourse that follow.

Accordingly, moving away consciously from high politics and approved anniversaries, the first two chapters probe the situational constructions of slavery and freedom during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For example, Claudius Fergus’s piece suggests that those African soldiers emancipated by joining European armies usually did not escape bondage in its various forms. Military loss and withdrawal could mean forced return to slaveholders, as it did for the African troops under the command of British General Nesbitt in 1798. Similarly, Daniel Livesay’s installment exposes the increased scrutiny and discrimination faced by mixed-race peoples in Britain with the rise of the abolitionist movement.

The strongest essays, however, are the third and fourth chapters, which deal with both women abolitionists and plantation owners. In chapter 3, Judith Jennings restores the significance of the friendship ties between Jamaican-born and mulatta Jane Harry Thresher and English Quaker Mary Morris Knowles to the first real pangs of abolitionist advocacy. In chapter 4, Sasha Turner delves into the self-interested maternalism that inspired widow Martha Bowen to run her family’s sugar plantation in Jamaica after formal emancipation. This uncovering of unexpected nuances and commonalities continues with the fifth chapter, in which Ulrich Pallua looks at five famous antislavery poems from 1788. After reading this analysis, one can never enjoy William Cowper’s “The Negro’s Complaint” without wondering about the limits and implications of his speaking on behalf of
the enslaved ever again. The last two chapters finish with a revisiting of African and British remembrances of slavery and the slave trade, pointing out the unfortunate pressures worldwide to gloss over the rough edges and uncomfortable truths still too close to home. Given its quality and scope, this collection should be acquired—especially by university libraries throughout the Atlantic basin.

Norfolk State University

Charles H. Ford

Poverty, Gender, and Life-Cycle under the English Poor Law, 1760–1834. By Samantha Williams. (Woodbridge, England: Royal Historical Society, 2011, Pp. 190. $90.00.)

Samantha Williams’s title is only peripherally connected to her study, for though it promises an analysis of huge swathes of material under the general topic of the English poor laws, the author actually confines herself to the relatively narrow area of poor-law documents in Campton and Shefford. For scholars of poor laws in these two communities, the book will be quite useful as Williams really does go by the numbers, providing lots of charts and graphs of who was given what when. She also has done a useful survey of other scholars’ work in these two communities. What is strikingly absent from this study is something to connect the dots. Why should anyone looking at English poor laws be interested in the precise details of these communities in particular? Her conclusions, that poor single women, especially mothers, collected more than men and that the “deserving” elderly consumed a large share of the available charity, are true for every community in England during the years covered by her study (as well as the years on either side of her chosen time period).

Given the decades-long scholarly mantra that women had no place in the working economy, Williams finds that for poor women this assumption simply was not true. Most poor women, and poor female children, worked for money (and not in prostitution, as so many tomes have opined). She finds that in the areas of her study

[almost] half of the women aged fifteen or over were allocated an occupation and, as in the 1851 census, it is likely that these were only for those women who were regularly employed; many more would have been in irregular employment. The straw-plaited trade dominated female employment in Campton, with almost 70 percent of women with recorded occupations so employed, while in Shefford the proportion was smaller, at 26 percent, followed by 33 percent employed as domestic servants. A wider
range of occupations were available to women in Shefford, but only in small numbers, including a dressmaker, a nurse, a schoolmistress, a charwoman, a milliner and a postmistress (27).

In addition, women followed in a range of “male” occupations as well as worked in agriculture. One of the most interesting findings of the book is that the job of “carer” was a paid occupation for women, even if the person(s) cared for was family.

Williams’s work is based on analysis of “almost 200 ‘pauper biographies’ and more than 1000 named paupers” (30). From these she puts together numerous bits of stories, allowing us to follow specific characters through their life spans as many of them go on and off and on again the pension of the community (this rotation is itself of great interest). One very important pattern that comes out of her work is how professionally organized much of the poverty industry was. One example is that not only did the community provide medical care but it would have a physician on its payroll, in some cases the same doctor for upwards of thirty years.

Although Williams concludes that “placing Campton’s and Shefford’s poor and their families, ratepayers, parochial officers and the local JP, Samuel Whitbread, ‘under the microscope’ has been extremely fruitful and rewarding,” she does not do enough with her microscopic data (165). Her volume almost reads like a set of well-researched notes both on the Campton and Shefford records and the scholarship on poor laws. The book needs more interpretation if it is to be substantial. Nonetheless, there are numerous nuggets of good information to be found in this study.

Oakton Community College

Mona Scheuermann

**GENERAL, COMPARATIVE, HISTORIOGRAPHICAL**


“What if?” No question can be as intriguing and, at the same time, as frustrating for a historian to attempt to answer. It is intriguing because it challenges the scholar to step out of the safe confines of deterministic history and, instead, try to understand how an event’s outcome might have been altered. Therein lies the value of counterfactual history; it forces the historian to ignore hindsight when examining all of the components that brought about the outcomes and how, based
on crucial decisions, twists of fate, or other human actions, these events might have turned out differently.

Good counterfactual history can deepen our knowledge of such historical events by forcing us to reexamine our understanding of them. It is precisely such an outcome, applied to the Pacific war, which led Jim Breshnahan to undertake this project. In gathering a group of World War II scholars, enthusiasts, and veterans and asking them a series of counterfactual queries, Breshnahan hopes to educate the reader “about what happened and what could have happened” (vii). What results is a series of chapters, resembling round-table discussions, in which the editor poses a number of pointed questions and the contributors briefly respond.

Several contributions to this work can be held up as examples of valuable counterfactual history. Having been asked how improved Japanese-American relations in the years leading up to the outbreak of the war in the Pacific might have altered the conflict, Harold J. Goldberg proceeds to lay out a hypothetical situation in which the relationship between these two countries did not deteriorate. Instead, encountering virtually no American resistance to its actions in the Far East and no cessation of trade with the United States, Japan decided “to finish off its traditional enemy—Russia” (35). After Goldberg constructs this counterfactual scenario, he then systematically dismantles it, contending that such an argument does not take into consideration the larger political realities of the time and that war with the United States was always a necessity if the Japanese ever desired a free hand in Asia.

Alvin Kernan’s response to a question regarding the failure of the Japanese to sink the Enterprise at the battle of the Santa Cruz Islands is another example of the value of counterfactual history. Kernan explains that the attack was not successful because the Japanese were simply unable to coordinate the attacks of their dive-bombers and torpedo planes on the American aircraft carrier. Had they been able to do so, he argues, the effects might have seriously impeded the Americans’ ability to prosecute the war in the Pacific, at least in the short term.

The downside to counterfactual history of this sort is that it does not yield itself to any new scholarship. Instead, the responses, the quality of which varies, tend to rely on informed speculation. Enthusiasts in the general public will likely find Refighting the Pacific War to be a very intriguing read, but it is of limited value to scholars of the Second World War.

East Tennessee State University
Jacob Bryant
When British writer Samuel Johnson wrote, “No man will be a sailor who has
contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for being in a ship is being in a jail,
with the chance of being drowned,” he left out other characteristics of life at sea
so horrible as to make drowning an attractive alternative. Kevin Brown fills the
gap in an extremely well researched examination of how sailors were kept healthy
at sea. Brown’s expertise is reflected in previous works on the discovery of
penicillin and the history of syphilis. In *Poxed and Scurvied*, he offers a vivid and
detailed explanation of the centuries-old problem of sickness at sea and attempts
to diagnose and overcome the maladies common to sailors.

Although exploration may have been instrumental to colonization, Brown
points out that shipboard conditions during the age of sail could derail any
country’s imperial designs. Squalid living conditions, crowded decks, poor food,
and harsh weather rendered ships floating Petri dishes for pathogens. Advances in
sails, hulls, and navigation pushed ships even further out to sea, increasing the
likelihood of sickness as well as the prospect of exchanging diseases with natives
in the New World. Consequently, ships became more than tools of empire. They
also became an avenue for invasion of the plague, cholera, and syphilis to
European ports.

As ships could not sail without sailors, nations with maritime aspirations
recognized the importance of keeping sailors healthy. So the ship’s surgeon
became central to health at sea. Though ignorant of the causes of infectious
diseases, surgeons nevertheless made significant strides in improving living con-
ditions, developing clinical trials to identify the cause of scurvy, and helping to
establish shore-based hospitals for sailors. War provided an additional catalyst
for improving the health of sailors. The Anglo-Dutch Wars raised the specter of
dealing with mass casualties at sea, leading to the foundation of the English system
of naval medicine. Even Horatio Nelson’s own injuries keenly informed his
concern for hygiene and health, which was lacking in his French and Spanish
adversaries.

Brown extends his research to include the plight of emigrants and slaves. Both
groups suffered on sea voyages. Surgeons were charged with keeping human
cargoes alive in horrifying conditions, often to the neglect of the crews of the slave
ships. Although free, huddled masses looking for opportunity abroad fared only
slightly better. The lack of food, contaminated water, and inadequate means of
disposing of human waste made ships breeding grounds for cholera and typhus.
By the late nineteenth century, technology had improved conditions to the point that traveling at sea became increasingly seen as a healthy experience for the affluent, while improved means of preserving food, water distillation, and the adoption of standard uniforms improved regular sailors’ living conditions. The sea would remain a dangerous place, as survivors of the Titanic and Andrea Doria would attest. But Brown’s exceptional work illustrates that most of the maladies that existed during Samuel Johnson’s time were by the twentieth century recognized and treatable.

Craig C. Felker


The history of the papacy often attracts those whose historical acumen is secondary to their ideological agenda. It is refreshing to see a book that combines scholarly integrity with faith and a conviction that these ten men were, indeed, among the shepherds that Christ appointed to feed his sheep, without either idealization or condemnation. To write a history of the papacy in under 150 pages is a courageous act. Eamon Duffy’s Ten Popes who Shook the World originated as a series of lectures given for the BBC Radio in 2007. When making a selection as rigorous as this one (ten pontiffs from a list of over 260), one is prone to encounter critics who maintain that this or that pope should have been included.

Yet, with this selection, Duffy highlights not only those popes who stood out for their personal achievement but also those whose pontificate represents a period of significant development in the history of the Catholic Church. The list includes Saint Peter, Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, Gregory VII, Innocent III, Paul III, Pius IX, Pius XII, John XXIII, and John Paul II. Duffy succeeds in capturing the importance of each pope in resounding one-liners: Leo the Great “invented the papacy as we know it,” and Gregory the Great is the aristocratic Roman monk who “unwittingly invented Europe” (47, 57). Under the aegis of Gregory VII, an “overbearing autocratic pope, human freedom took one small, uncertain step forward,” and Innocent III, in his meeting with Francis of Assisi, “was no saint, but he knew a saint when he met one,” and “just for once, absolute power had been wielded to make room for visionaries” (69, 79).

Duffy treats these men as neither saints nor sinners but more often, paradoxically, as both at the same time. Pius IX, for example, was a truly likeable man, devout, humble, and uncomplicated; yet, by the end of his pontificate, the papacy wielded more authority than ever before. He started out as a modernizer of the
papacy, but by the end of his pontificate the Catholic Church had become firmly entrenched in antimodernism. In another paradox, Duffy says of Pope John XXIII, a very traditional and personally conservative man, that “in the hands of this good man, the ice began to melt” (125). Duffy’s portrait of Pius XII is also subtle, highlighting both the difficult choices that Pius XII faced under the Nazi regime and the prudence that he was trying to display. But ultimately he regrets that “when the helpless were being slaughtered, the most powerful voice in Christendom faltered, and fell silent” (113). For a generation that possibly will see the canonization of one of the pontiffs described in this book (John Paul II), *Ten Popes Who Shook the World* is an enlightening and accessible introduction to the subject.

*Calvin College*

Frans van Liere


Apart from accommodating themselves successfully to an ever-changing world, the modern Olympics have been represented also as reviving the games of ancient Greece, a point emphasized when Athens was selected to host the first modern Olympiad in 1896. Moreover, as recorded in Armand D’Angour’s chapter in *Thinking the Olympics*, at the closing ceremony of the 1896 games, one British competitor, an Oxford student named George Robertson, reaffirmed the Olympic movement’s link with the classical tradition by reciting a celebratory ode composed in ancient Greek. Modeled upon Pindar’s Olympian odes, Robertson’s recitation honored Pindar as the foremost lyric poet of ancient Greece. More recently, D’Angour, an Oxford academic, reinforced Olympism’s classical dimension when accepting a commission to compose an “authentically Pindaric” ode for Athens 2004 (199).

What Barbara Goff, the coeditor, describes as the repeated “forcing of the modern into the ancient mould” defined by classical tradition proves the central theme of *Thinking the Olympics*, which developed out of a conference held in 2008 at the Institute of Classical Studies, University of London (9). Apart from one Greek-based academic, the other ten contributors are based equally in Britain and the United States. Collectively—to quote Goff—“the essays interrogate the notion of the games’ classical tradition, investigating the active construction of it at different historical junctures, for varying audiences, and in relation to competing demands” (16). Moreover, contributors, undertaking this task in an authori-
tative and well-researched manner, approach the book’s theme from varying disciplinary perspectives, including archaeology, art history, classics, comparative literature, cultural history, and politics.

Thinking the Olympics proves most relevant to those studying Olympic-related issues, particularly given the frequent tendency to acknowledge the classical tradition but without necessarily knowing much about either the ancient games or the nature of ancient-modern linkage. Even so, this book’s selective thematic focus means that readers wanting a comprehensive account of the ancient games must look elsewhere, such as to The Ancient Olympics [2004] by Nigel Spivey, one of this book’s contributors. Notwithstanding its improving historical quality, many historians still prove dismissive of sports history. However, this book has much to offer all historians. Highlighting the value of sport as an alternative, indeed frequently revealing, prism through which to view past and present, Thinking the Olympics offers illuminating insights into changing perspectives over time regarding the classical tradition; the invention of tradition, and particularly the use of an idealized version of ancient Greece for both overt and covert present-day purposes at varying time periods for diverse audiences; and the problem that “so much is speculation” because of fragmentary and partial evidence (33). Readers are offered also a new take on Pythagoras. Forget mathematical theorems, writes Spivey, when claiming that Pythagoras was the “first among the Greeks to articulate the moral and medical justification of sport” (38).

Kingston University

Peter J. Beck


That Karl Marx remains relevant today and will continue to be in the twenty-first century are the two central points of this stimulating new book (5). The title reflects another vital aspect of the project: Eric Hobsbawm wants to remind readers that Marx’s most significant impact as a thinker has been how his ideas have contributed to changing the world (375–377). Hobsbawm concludes with an optimistic appraisal of the impact of the economic crisis that began in 2008 because it demonstrated that “capitalism is not the answer, but the question” (417). As Marx was a critic both of capitalism and of economists who ignored where “capitalist globalization” was leading, his work still has much to teach us as we strive to create a better world, Hobsbawm asserts (418).

Divided into two parts, “Marx and Engels” and “Marxism,” each eight chapters in length, Hobsbawm’s book is wide ranging without being shallow. Written
for a variety of projects between 1956 and 2009, approximately two-thirds of the texts appear either for the first time or for the first time in English (vii-viii). The bulk of the book surveys, both broadly and deeply, the reception and impact of Marx’s (and Engels’s) ideas, with chapters on “Marx Today,” “The Fortunes of Marx’s and Engels’ Writings,” “Dr. Marx and the Victorian Critics,” “The Influence of Marxism 1880–1914,” “In the Era of Anti-fascism 1929–45,” “The Influence of Marxism 1945–83,” “Marxism in Recession 1983–2000,” and “Marx and Labour: the Long Century.” The volume also includes useful thematic chapters on the relationship of Marx and Engels to pre-Marxian socialism, politics, precapitalist formations, and Antonio Gramsci and the reception of his ideas. Were there more space, the reviewer would consider some of Hobsbawm’s choices about the influence of Marx and Marxism on the Continent, the historiographical significance of some of his assertions, and the significance of his defensive references to developments in the United Kingdom. Taken together, however, these criticisms detract little from the significance or worth of the project.

These essays are informed by a long lifetime of activism and interest in Marx and Marxism, along with close attention to both text and context. This work is not an ideological political polemic or an explicit part of academic debates. As is almost always the case with Hobsbawm, his books remain somewhat above the intellectual fray, being notoriously stingy in references to other contemporary historians and in citations. Yet this book demands a great deal of its readers in terms of cultural and historical knowledge of the period between the 1830s and the present, as well as linguistically, as Hobsbawm’s erudition leads him to include a significant number of phrases and terms in German, Italian, and French. In clear, often elegant prose, Hobsbawm assertively makes a convincing case for why Marx and Marxism deserve to survive the intellectual, political, and methodological cataclysms that eroded their influence in the last thirty years. He obviously hopes that the torch will be picked up and passed along to new generations.

*Manhattan College*

Jeff Horn


In this brief volume, the author examines those occasions when soldiers have faced formidable enemies and overwhelming odds, sometimes to triumph, sometimes to perish, but in all events behaving in ways that inspired. Even obliteration, if managed with élan, could boost morale by example and pave the path to final
victory. Rob Johnson surveys a broad landscape and wide calendar for his examples and concludes that no single characteristic supplies a universal explanation for why certain men at a certain place would stare at death and stand their ground.

Physical courage always played a part, of course, especially individual bravery and a compelling sense of honor. The self-perception of elite military status—think of Bonaparte’s Old Guard or the American Civil War’s Iron Brigade—was also important, but there was always more to it than uplifted chins and stiff upper lips. Martial aptitude, discipline, resolve, endurance, leadership, a just cause, and sometimes simple obduracy were important factors as well. The luck of one’s position could be crucial, as with defenders usually having a tactical advantage, but a sense of inevitability could make offensive maneuvers invincible against even the most daunting odds. The Union charge at Chattanooga comes to mind, though merely as an example, for inevitability completely failed George Pickett at Gettysburg and the Light Brigade in the Crimea.

Johnson does not use any of these examples, however. Rather, the best parts of his book are the descriptions of the events in the early twenty-first century. In these, Johnson demonstrates a flair for explaining the plight of modern armies fighting insurgents and the difficulties of sustaining coalitions in protracted conflicts. He makes evident the fog and friction of the United States’ early days in Iraq in 2003 and the enormous challenges faced by American and British troops fighting the Taliban in 2006–2008. Yet beyond that, the most peculiar features of the book are the examples he uses to probe his thesis. George Washington’s victory at Yorktown is not the story of an American army fighting against insurmountable odds, except in tying the incident back to four years earlier and the army’s deprivation at Valley Forge. Lord Cornwallis was the outnumbered and outgunned party at Yorktown, and he was sufficiently deterred by his prospects to surrender as soon as conscience allowed. Washington at Monmouth Courthouse is a better fit for Johnson’s theme. Similarly, Ambrose Burnside’s hapless assault on the bridge at Antietam was not a matter of uneven odds but resulted from a faulty sense of the terrain. The aforementioned Pickett or Ulysses S. Grant’s half-hour bloodbath at Cold Harbor are more apropos.

In fact, scores of examples seem more appropriate to study in light of the ideas posed in Johnson’s introduction: Baltimore in 1814, Andrew Jackson at New Orleans, the Alamo, General Gordon at Khartoum, the defense of Rorke’s Drift, and the Bulge all seem highly appropriate and potentially illuminative. Instead, Johnson’s brief chapters make for a thin narrative of well-known events and
relatively obscure stories alike, such as the predicament of the French at Camerone or the clash at Kohima during World War II.

As a consequence, scholars of Western military history will find little new in this volume, and the uninitiated will either be at sea or left unaware of many of the most often considered cases that fit Johnson’s subject. At most, readers interested in exciting stories of bravery and tales featuring plucky common soldiers will discover a pleasant diversion.

*United States Air Force Academy*

Jeanne T. Heidler


The author of this book has written an exhaustively researched, richly detailed, and lucid account of Anglo-American warfare, encompassing the era from Elizabeth I to General Grant. This work, because of its particular approach, should be of great interest to students and scholars of modern warfare, particularly as it may have relevance to events since 11 September 2001.

Wayne E. Lee’s thesis is that war is “defined by both violence and restraint” and that the English and Americans, by the tactics they employed, distinguished between those perceived as “brothers” versus those viewed as “barbarians” (2). However, the nature of warfare changed from nearly unrestrained to limited to, by the end of the period, again unrestricted. Lee analyzes certain conflicts by examining the capacity, control, calculation, and culture of the military forces involved. He supports his thesis by a narrowly focused account of nine examples: two conflicts between the English and Irish during the late sixteenth century, two engagements between English forces during the English Civil War, two English-Native American engagements (1586 and 1725), two during the American Revolution, and, finally, a brief overview of the “hard war” strategies of Generals Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan during the American Civil War.

The Irish situation clearly demonstrates the distinction between barbarians and brothers. The Irish were treated as the former because of religious differences and the perception of English cultural superiority. These factors, and the fear of Spanish intervention, led the English to abandon restraint and employ “tactics of deliberate devastation designed to generate starvation” (61). By contrast, the English Civil War was a conflict between brothers, and although there were exceptions, it was conducted within limits, especially when compared to the Irish experience or seventeenth-century international conflicts.
The American Revolution was also a brothers’ war and showed moderation on both sides similar to the English Civil War. General Washington recognized the necessity of restraint due to revolutionary ideology and the necessity of postwar reconciliation. Although the British army was less restrained, it too was limited by a strong disciplinary code and tradition. Though the Americans and British demonstrated mutual respect, that was not the case regarding American treatment of Native Americans. American troops showed little or no regard for Native Americans, whom they viewed, as the English did the Irish, as barbarians.

Although the American Civil War, the last brothers’ war in the English-American experience, commenced in the tradition of a limited war much like the English Civil War or the American Revolution, it soon evolved into “total war.” Due to industrialization, the home front became as important as the battlefront and led to direct attacks on civilians and property and the ability to field vast armies. The long struggle over slavery further inflamed deep-seated passions.

Lee concludes that his work offers some insight into events following 11 September 2001 because the attacks aroused the “old fear of barbarians” (245). So the question is, “[W]ill cultural preferences for humanity and restraint continue to shape the calculations of a society and a military that has access to such capacity?” (245).

Eastern Illinois University

Dan M. Hockman


Woe betide the scholar surveying the human history of warfare in a mere three hundred pages. Even more woe, from a historian’s perspective, betide the political scientists who try to impose a single all-encompassing model on that experience. In the present work, the authors, both eminent political scientists and students of modern conflict, heroically attempt to understand the present nature of war by examining the ten-thousand-plus years of war that brought us here.

The authors postulate that war has evolved through an interactive process with five other variables: political economy, political organization, weaponry, threat environment, and military organization. Those variables “coevolved” with war; changes in one produced changes in the others. The closest thing to a consistent prime mover, according to the authors, were the two main shifts in political economy: the move from hunting and gathering to agriculture and the more unevenly distributed shift to industrialization. Below that very long timescale of
analysis, the six factors have coevolved, and to prioritize one factor over others, as the authors claim some military historians have done, is to oversimplify the process. Within this coevolutionary framework, the authors detect three “accelerations” in the arc of war. The first occurred through the linked changes brought about by the invention of agriculture, states, and metal weaponry, from roughly 4000 to 2000 BCE. The second, tied to the emergence of larger empires and the invention of iron, lasted from 1500 BCE to 100 CE. It must be noted that apparently only five hundred years in this 4,100-year period were not “accelerated.” The final acceleration, mostly confined to the West, occurred from 1500 CE to the present, resulted primarily from industrialization, and has produced unexpected side effects that define the current nature of war: primarily a recent decline in great power interstate war and an increase in weak state internal war. Crucial to this whole argument is the assertion that each of these accelerations marked an increase in the “intensity” or “severity” of war.

There is much to ponder in this book, and at times this reviewer was deeply impressed by the authors’ thoroughness in plundering the historical and anthropological literature. There are inevitable flaws of detail in some of the historical case studies. But in a short review, let this reviewer focus on one key “macro” flaw. The authors have accepted the old understanding of hunter-gatherer warfare as relatively innocuous. That presumed innocuity undergirds their entire argument for intensification as a key characteristic of the arc of war. Arguably, however, on a per capita basis, prestate warfare was more lethal than later state-based versions. Using their own variables, one might argue that the lack of an authoritarian political organization in a hunter-gatherer society meant that there were many more decision makers capable of choosing hostilities to solve resource (or other) problems. Conflict might seem small-scale, but its frequency could be very high and therefore its overall per capita lethality equally significant. The “selective pacification” effect, which the authors correlate to the increasing cost of industrial war, in fact might better correlate with states’ increasing political organizational ability to suppress violent problem solving by their inhabitants.

Wayne E. Lee